Shelley's Lost Letters to Harriet

ATLANTIC MONTHLY

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Calvin Coolidge. *The Genius of the Average* . . . . . GAMALIEL BRADFORD 1

The Shadow of Censorship

The Theory . . . . . WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON 13

The Practice . . . . . EDWARD WEEKS 17

Thrills. *Life in the Big Tent* . . . . . JAY ZARADO 26

The Gambolier. *A Story* . . . . . MERLE COLBY 35

A Batman at Large . . . . . ALEXANDER IRVINE 44

Up from the Bottom of the World

Lincoln's Washington . . . . . FROM THE JOURNAL OF WILLIAM A. CROFFUT 55

Ballad of a Curious Encounter . . . . . ROSALIE HICKLER 66

Wildcat Settlement. *A Story* . . . . . ELEANOR RISLEY 67

Government and Opposition . . . . . H. D. HILL 78

The Last of the Squires . . . . . RALPH ADAMS CRAM 80

A Leave-taking. *Verse* . . . . . OWEN LATTIMORE 86

The Psychology of French Politics . . . . . ANDRÉ SIEGFRIED 87

The Anti-religious Front . . . . . WILLIAM L. SULLIVAN 96

Götterdämmerung. *A Back-yard Drama* . . . . . BRADFORD K. DANIELS 105

THE NEW WORLD

The Break in the Credit Chain . . . . . EDGAR LAWRENCE SMITH 108

Not Quantity but Quality of Credit

Islam and Ourselves . . . . . ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE 114

Shelley's Lost Letters to Harriet. I . . . . . LESLIE HOTSON 122

Contributors' Club: The Passing of Pippa — How Death May Feel — Pointing the View — Self-sufficiency 134

Contributors' Column 139

Atlantic Bookshelf . . . . . *Front Advertising Section*

The Financial Counselor: George E. Putnam . . . . . *Back Advertising Section*

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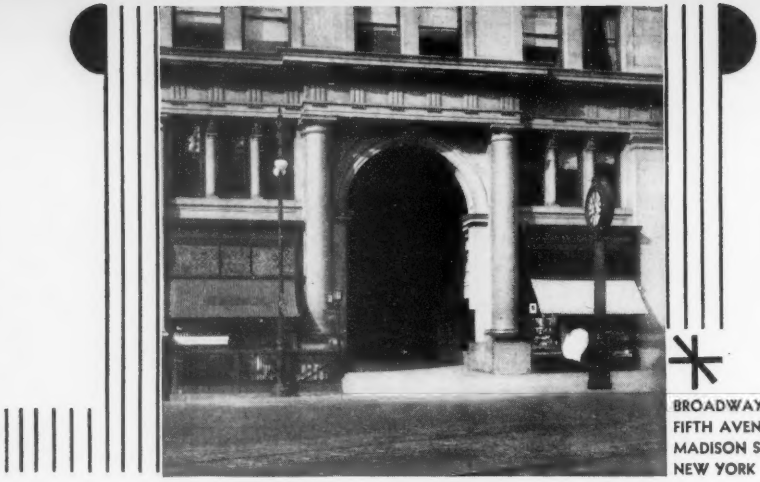

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A Guide to Good Books

AMERICAN history seems but a short span when one stops to think that a man who studied Plato with Emerson and who was a lieutenant colonel in the Civil War is this year the author of one of the most notable new books. The man I refer to is Mr. Justice Holmes, son of Oliver Wendell Holmes, pupil of Emerson, close friend of William James. Mr. Holmes while yet a young veteran of scars (he was wounded three times in the war) made the most momentous decision in his life when he had to choose between philosophy and the study of law. He chose the latter, to the permanent endowment of United States jurisprudence.

Readers of the news, lawyers, and liberals generally, are familiar with the phrase, 'Justices Holmes and Brandeis dissenting.' In his excellent magazine profile Cameron Rogers states that Mr. Holmes's outstanding quality, in the public mind, has been his belief that sectional lawgivers are better fitted to understand what laws their sections require than nine judges sitting at Washington. In his forty-five years' service on the bench (twenty-eight of them in Washington), Mr. Justice Holmes has studied the immense complexities of the changing American life. And the opinions which he has arrived at are, as Professor Chafee of the Harvard Law School says, 'literature, in a prose style which his own father could not equal.'

THE MAN *of the* MONTH

JUSTICE OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES

The Dissenting Opinions of Mr. Justice Holmes

[Vanguard Press, $4.50]

ONLY lawyers and litigants usually care to read what judges write, but this book is literature. To find a judge in this country or England whose power over thoughts and words is comparable to that of Holmes, we must go back to Bacon. These opinions recall the *Essays* in their epigrammatic quality, their constant search for general ideas to illuminate concrete facts. But even Bacon could not write about law so as to interest the layman. Holmes took with him upon the bench the philosophic interest which made him the friend of William James, and a prose style which his own father might have enjoyed but could not equal.

Burke characterized the religion of the northern American colonies as 'the dissidence of dissent.' It is only natural that Mr. Justice Holmes should have this in his blood. Like his ancestors who settled New England, he will not be silent just because he is in the minority. The forceful expression of a lost cause may bring its ultimate victory in thoughtful minds. It is much to be regretted that such independence has now disappeared from the state court over which he once presided, and that dissenting opinions almost never occur in the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.

Yet Mr. Justice Holmes is far more than a dissenting judge. His majority opinions much outnumber the dissents, and they must be read together to understand his constructive views of the application of law and the Constitution to twentieth-century problems. This book would have been better if it had made a selection among all his judicial writings, instead of relegating to the rear a few majority opinions and a collection of snippets from others, and if it had not been limited to his work on the United States Supreme Court. This, however, is the first collection of Holmes's opinions for the general reader, and it was a job well worth doing.

What will the layman gain from reading Mr. Justice Holmes? First, the intellectual pleasure given by a thinker who knows how to use words for the expression of general ideas. 'A word is not a crystal, transparent and unchanged; it is the skin of a living thought and may vary greatly in color and content according to the circumstances and the time in which it is used.' 'The common law is not a brooding omnipresence in the sky, but the articulate voice of some sovereign that can be identified.'

Secondly, several opinions deal with important legal questions of literature and art. Does a motion-picture play of *Ben Hur* infringe the copyright of the novel? When a composer's music is played in restaurants, may he get royalties on the ground that it is performed 'for profit' although no admission fee is charged? Justice Holmes remarks: 'It is true that music is not the sole object, but neither is the food, which probably could be got cheaper elsewhere. The object is a repast in surroundings that to people having limited powers of conversation . . . give a luxurious pleasure not to be had from eating a silent meal. If music did not pay it would be given up.' May New York law limit the extortions of theatre-ticket agencies? 'It seems to me that theatres are as much devoted to public use as anything well can

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be. We have not that respect for art that is one of the glories of France. But to many people the superfluous is the necessary, and it seems to me that government does not go beyond its sphere in attempting to make life livable for them.'

Still more important is the discussion of economic problems. When a state limits the power of an employer to enjoin boycotts which injure his business, is this unconstitutionally depriving him of 'property'? 'Delusive exactness is a source of fallacy throughout the law. By calling a business "property" you make it seem like land. . . . But you cannot give it definiteness of contour by calling it a thing. It is a course of conduct and like other conduct is subject to substantial modification.' May a state require that stockholders in drug-store corporations shall be licensed pharmacists? 'A standing criticism of the use of corporations in business is that it causes such business to be owned by people who do not know anything about it.' May the manufacturer of a patent medicine like Peruna fix the prices to be charged for it by his wholesale and retail dealers? Holmes's dissent (unfortunately omitted from this collection) believes it better to leave trade alone. 'There may be necessaries that sooner or later must be dealt with like short rations in a shipwreck, but they are not Dr. Miles's medicines.'

Since the Harding administration the decisions of the Supreme Court have become increasingly favorable to the protection of business and wealth against new forms of social legislation. At times the majority of the court seems to be exercising the functions of the English House of Lords before 1910, which was free to overturn the action of the people's representatives merely because it disapproved of the particular measure. Again and again Holmes has vainly protested that a law is not unconstitutional just because the judges disagree with it. The Constitution was meant to bound the legislature, not to bind it. The court is likely to meet the fate of the House of Lords in the Parliament Act if the present trend of decisions continues. Holmes and his dissenting associates have shown the course which the court ought to pursue. Outworn economic doctrines and personal preferences cannot be crystallized forever into constitutional law.

Finally, these opinions emphasize the value of toleration. Trial and error must be permitted as the means of progress. The states should not be prevented from making social experiments within their own borders, even if the resulting legislation differs much from that generally in force. The most important principle of the Constitution is 'the principle of free thought — not free thought for those who agree with us, but freedom for the thought which we hate.'

Elsewhere Mr. Justice Holmes has said that the life of the law is not logic but experience. This book gives the general reader the opportunity to watch the experience of our own time filtering through the mind of a great lawyer and a great writer.

Z. Chafee, Jr.

It is fashionable nowadays for young critics in New York and London to take pot shots at each other over the water. The American critic says the Briton is patronizing to American letters — and rat-tat-tat goes an article in counter attack. In a recent London Letter Hugh Walpole remarks good-naturedly that this is 'an old cry.' 'Someone,' he continues, '— no fool, either, — has just told me that in his opinion there are two younger novelists who are in a separate world both of ability and performance from all other younger novelists, whether English or American: Julian Green and Ernest Hemingway. With this opinion I am at one. These are both American born. We have no novelists under forty in England to touch them.'

This is high praise, and though some may think to qualify it (Hemingway, remember, is usually banned in Boston!) no one could ever call it patronizing. It may be interesting to turn from this to the appraisal Marshall Best, an American critic, gives to some recent English novels.

English Novels

'Whether we approach the Englishman through his summer holiday or through his inheritance of literature,' Edmund Blunden wrote recently, 'we find him Nature's man.' He is no less Nature's man whether we approach him in peace or in war. The best passages in each of the three books reviewed here are in praise of the seasons or in loving enjoyment of landscapes and outdoor life; two of the books, indeed, would be undistinguished were it not for these charmed pages.

One of the two is ***The Hawbucks*** (Macmillan, $2.50), **John Masefield's** Victorian romance, which can only be regarded as a slight anachronism. It contains the material for a narrative poem such as he has written so well in *Reynard the Fox* and *Right Royal*. But as a novel it has neither the impact of present truth nor the glamour of a past period imaginatively re-created. Its story is that of the squire's fair daughter and her ten or more suitors; and of her half sister by a 'left-handed union,' who possesses most of the heroine's beauty and more than her brains, thus offering solace to one of the two most serious contenders when his rival and brother walks off with the heroine's hand. Its shabbiness as a story is tempered, however, by two or three first-rate scenes — a splendid fox hunt, a lively point-to-point race, and a night ride by the hero through the season's most memorable blizzard. The Chaucerian characterizing and the narrative directness that distinguish Masefield's story-poems are utilized here too, but the economy

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SEVEN IRON MEN by PAUL DE KRUIF
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MIDDLETOWN by R. S. and H. M. LYND
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Recommended to both beginners and teachers by *The Bridge World*. $2.00

THE MAGIC ISLAND by WILLIAM B. SEABROOK, $3.50

ELIZABETH AND ESSEX by LYTTON STRACHEY, $3.75

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which was their virtue in the verse gives an oddly foreshortened effect in the novel.

A very different England appears in ***The Good Companions***, by **J. B. Priestley** (Harper, $3.00). These 'Good Companions' are a wandering vaudeville troupe, or 'concert party,' as they seem to be called in England, who move back and forth and up and down across the shapeless and toneless territory known as the Midlands, offering their show to its dingy towns and thriving industrial centres, now venturing north into Yorkshire, now east or west to the waters that bound the island. They are a very human crew, with all the charms and oddities that make actors favorites everywhere; through their eyes the land takes on shape and tone for us until it burns with the beauty of a landscape long lived in; and through their contacts with landladies, captious audiences, strolling showmen, railway officials, shopkeepers, and humbler people, we come to be at home with the everyday faces and manners of provincial England's masses. These are the country counterpart of Dickens's Londoners, but they are Dickens in modern dress and without the underscoring.

As a solvent to this group without caste or place, come three refugees from different fixed strata of English life: Miss Trant, a gentlewoman fleeing from spinsterhood; Inigo Jollifant, a university man, who escapes capriciously and by night from the restraints of a boys' school where he has been teaching; and Jesiah Oakroyd, a laboring Yorkshireman, out of a job, tormented by his family, and keen for the philosophic comforts of the road. These three are brought together just in time to save the little band of actors from collapse. Jess lends a hand with scenery and things and soon becomes indispensable; Miss Trant's money and enterprise set the machinery in motion again; and Inigo's skill as pianist, composer, and impresario brings in delighted audiences and sends the party off on a riot of success. The success is sufficiently fretted with failures and other mishaps, it is true, to give their progress a healthy uncertainty and to keep the reader anxious over every move they make. But this is a story for those who wave the handkerchief for Tinker Bell, who know that dreams do not always come true but are ready to believe that they will, so it is only fair that Jerry should marry an heiress and Elsie a hotel keeper; that Susie should become a London star, Inigo an extravagantly successful writer of song hits; that even Miss Trant should live out the happy dream of a not-quite-old maid; and that Oakroyd should find his way at last to his loving daughter in Canada, with only a wistful backward glance at the England which they all love.

Too friendly a word can scarcely be spoken for this leisurely, good-natured idyll. Its 640 close pages — the length of the old three-decker — make it probably the longest light novel in the language, unless we except *Tristram Shandy*, which it shares with in more things than length. It is a novel of sentiment written by a man of intelligence and wit, with abundant feeling for nature and human nature; and it taps vast stores of quiet mirth. Incidentally, it is about the most 'proper' novel that a young modern writer has dared to produce.

As far as those two books are concerned, the war might never have occurred. ***The Wet Flanders Plain*** (Dutton, $2.50) records a nine-day walking tour, in 1928, by a veteran, **Henry Williamson**, who remembers well. He wanders with a comrade among the fertile meadows and machine-made Reconstruction villages that now disguise the British war zone in Flanders; he visits an English cemetery, admires the Canadian memorial near St. Julien, observes the changing as well as the changeless ways of French peasantry; walks thoughtfully along roads where he passed once before under enemy bombardment; inspects the remnants of Hill 60 and other famous battle scenes; and pays his respects to the great black waste known as the Labyrinthe, where the German dead lie buried. The film of time has been allowed to overlay the scenes of the war. Bitterness has not altogether faded, but there is no longer the heat of battle to burn away all other thoughts, and reflection now has its way. Here is an opportunity for tempered irony, for the nostalgia of reminiscence, and a solemn word against war. But the book is not well organized, being little better than a scattering of entries from a diary, lacking in emphasis and differentiation. The known qualities of this sensitive writer of English prose come out only in his loving observations of nature, heightened, if ever so little, by the contrasting scenes of war. He remains a naturalist in his best moments: when he hears larks singing at Vimy, sees the bulging eyes of bullfrogs in an old moat at Ypres, recalls an unwary hen promenading on a trench parapet. It is the thought of Devonshire cliffs and his small son romping on the sands that gives point to his rebuke against war and injects one of the moments of most genuine emotion into a somewhat haphazard series of reminiscences.

MARSHALL BEST

A YEAR ago an Englishman, D. B. Wyndham Lewis, discovered himself to us in his biography of François Villon which, thanks to the mass production of a book club, went home to 85,000 readers. To judge from this and his more recent biography of Louis XI, Mr. Lewis is residing not in London but in the Middle Ages, where, says Olga Katzin, he is entertainingly at home.

***King Spider*, by D. B. Wyndham Lewis**
[Coward-McCann, $5.00]

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a stock villain into an estimable sovereign. Never did champion bring stouter heart to a difficult ordeal. But his choice is unfortunate and his cause endangered by his very title, *King Spider*. Royal birds, royal lions, leopards, and eagles have appealed to posterity, but *never* a royal insect. If you call a king 'Spider' he must be evil or there are no parallels in nature. Mr. Wyndham Lewis does not conceal or extenuate his hero's faults; he embraces them. Take him for all in all, he says, this was a king. But it is hard to kindle enthusiasm over a ruler who merely works hard, grinds the faces of his subjects, and dies the victim of senile terror at the age of sixty.

If Louis had nothing spectacular about him, he was far too great to be ignored. A mediæval figure, he was the first modern king, the first to understand finance, the first to prefer diplomacy to arms. His handling of enemies within and without his kingdom, the princely houses, the foreign kings, make lively reading. Of his extraordinary administrative ability we are told in detail. Yet, after such tributes, the best said of him, even here, is that he neither squandered his revenues on display nor paraded his mistresses, and that he was a good son of the Church. Which is to say that he did not indulge in vices to which he was not inclined.

The truth is, Mr. Wyndham Lewis is an enthusiast; he has discovered the Middle Ages and found them so much to his taste that even the bad in them is good because it belonged to the era before modernity. That is why the book has color in full measure. We are pushed headlong into the France of Louis, the Paris of Villon, 'the vast anchored nef of Notre Dame, the many-colored streets.' Here is a rich contemporary record of the splendors of the court of 'Our dear brother of Burgundy'; the gentle interlude of Margaret of Scotland, done to death by slanderous tongues; a popular novel of the times; a portrait gallery of Louis's familiars; some letters of the king to his dear and well-beloved subjects (the salt of the collection); and, as if this were not enough, a complete inferential biography of Mr. Wyndham Lewis himself.

OLGA KATZIN

HASTY arithmetic tells me that seventy-nine volumes of biography have appeared in recent months. In the face of so many true stories and confessions one has to pick and choose. ***The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge*** (Cosmopolitan Press, $3.00) attracted me: it has a pleasing type page and the most appropriate end papers of the season. All the way through the book I felt that I was the American people looking into a mirror. There we all are drawn to the life. The reader's impression is of a very definite, but thin, personality with a philosophy based on simple convictions transmitted from his father and grandfather. He has a great deal of shrewdness, much right-mindedness, and, serving God and man as honestly as he has done, he is utterly convinced that Providence is looking after him. With this I quite agree.

It seems to me that Mr. Coolidge has done a very serviceable job. He is free of most of the self-consciousness of the biographer; he is not mawkish, nor given to self-praise, but sets down the truth simply as he sees it. His style is, I think, the result of his political writing and speaking. The paragraphs are formed of terse, thrifty sentences; yet each is closed with a phrase whose twist or emphasis suddenly gives a sting to the words that have gone before. What distinction the book has comes from an occasional passage which shows genuine feeling. He loves his father. He loves what has become an entirely conventional memory of his mother. He is appreciative of his wife and admires his boy. He is a patriot, too, and I wish him well.

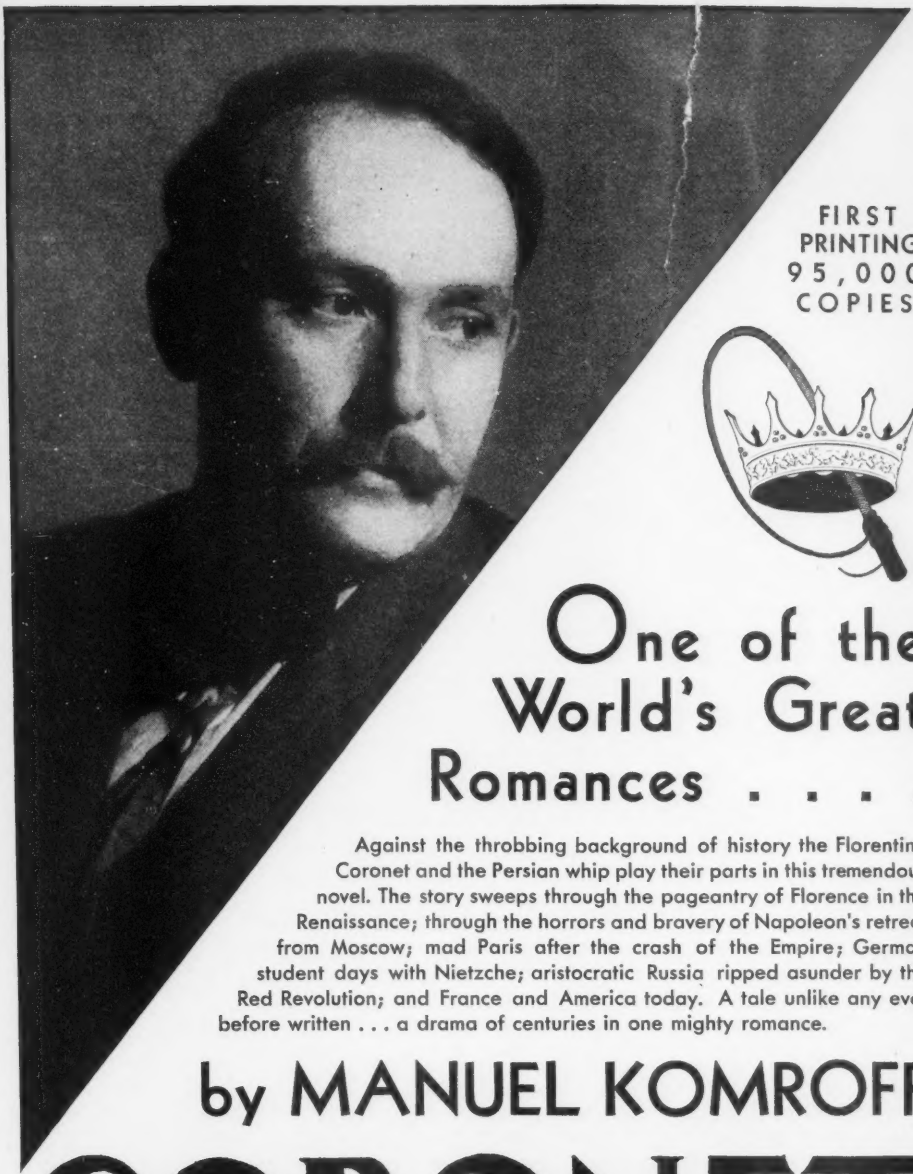
To Mr. Charles Johnston of New York we turn for an estimation of some other Americans of intellect, a group in contrast to the biographies of action which he reviewed for us last month.

AMERICANS OF INTELLECT

IN conceiving and carrying out his study of ***Hawthorne*** (Little, Brown, $3.50), **Newton Arvin** has undertaken an almost impossible task, which he has brought to a successful issue. To paint a picture of the external life of a personality so fugitive and secretive is already much; to analyze and present his writings in detail is something more; this biographer undertakes in addition to discover and reveal the spiritual keynote of Hawthorne's character, to bring to light, in the old phrase, the moral of the story, and in this exceedingly difficult undertaking he succeeds. The moral is what Buddhists call 'the dire heresy of separateness.'

A function of the novelists, rarely fulfilled, is to supplement the chronicles, to paint vignettes on the margins of history, to incarnate in living figures the form and pressure of their time, adding atmosphere, color, and personal warmth to the dry records of the historians. Nathaniel Hawthorne lived through periods of American history full of vital significance, but we seek in vain for any genuine impression of them in his books. *The Scarlet Letter* is enacted ostensibly in Colonial Boston, *The Marble Faun* in modern Rome, but in psychic atmosphere they are as remote as the Mountains of the Moon. It is futile to seek in Hawthorne for the spirit and local color of any period, especially his own.

What, then, is his claim to greatness? Something more universal, as his biographer sees it. Through his willfully cloistered years Hawthorne discovered a principle, not of American history, but of universal life, and this principle he has incarnated in a score of persons, in



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different settings with the poignant intensity that gives permanent life to his writings. The principle is the destructive power of egotism, which poisons and disintegrates the spiritual nature. In this sense, the essence of Hawthorne's biography is a moral; the author is successful because he establishes the validity of this moral.

The Life of *Weir Mitchell* by **Anna Robeson Burr** (Duffield, $6.00) stands in complete contrast. Its unity lies not so much in the spiritual insight of the biographer as in the robust and vigorously radiative personality of Doctor Mitchell himself. And, while he wrote historical novels, and may even lay claim to have invented the American romance, the primary interest is not in these purposed pictures of Colonial life and the Civil War; it is rather in the personality of the gifted physician, as incarnating three generations of Philadelphia, when Philadelphia was still the representative city of the nation.

Boswell paints for us, incidentally, the London of George III, and the picture is invaluable because of its unconscious sincerity. In somewhat the same way this biography brings to life again an older Philadelphia, but with the difference that the city, rather than the man, emerges as the major theme.

In one of his letters Weir Mitchell says that his writing wants the permanent style that makes a master. It is a true criticism, marking the limitation of his stories and his verse. He has a better chance of survival, not as a writer, but as a robust and picturesque figure, representative of an interesting period of American history.

A biographer may give us a familiar picture of the external events and appearances of his subject's life, or he may seek a more intimate insight into the deeper significance of that life. In writing of ***Emerson*, Phillips Russell** (Brentano, $5.00) has chosen familiarity rather than intimacy. He is a writer of American biographies, rather than a convinced, intuitive student of Emerson. He presents us with a mass of detail, all exceedingly interesting, picturesque, and accurate; but at the end we feel as if, in this study of Emerson, we had everything except Emerson himself.

Our biographer draws certain comparisons between the thought of Emerson and some of the more philosophical conclusions of contemporary science. One is inclined to think that he is on the right track, but does not go far enough. Our astronomers suggest that we may find the underlying reality in the Logos, which is essentially the Oversoul of Emerson. But they hardly pass the threshold of the dwelling in which Emerson has his permanent abode. Modern science applies the surface powers of the mind to the analysis of natural law. Emerson uses deeper faculties to study the spiritual laws, of which natural laws are the outer covering, as did the great Orientals before him. So we shall be well advised if, following the counsel of the biographer's Afterword, we turn from the biography to the essays We shall thus get the real man.

Reading the ***Life and Letters of Stuart P. Sherman*, by Jacob Zeitlin** and **Homer Woodbridge** (Farrar and Rinehart, $10.00), one remembers it is customary to speak of Stuart Sherman as a critic — the most vigorous, perhaps the most distinguished, in American letters. Yet one doubts whether that is his chief claim to consideration. The texture of his writing will hardly stand comparison with Sainte-Beuve, with Lessing of the *Laocoön*, with Matthew Arnold. It would be difficult to choose from among his essays anything equal to Arnold's studies of Burns or Victor Hugo, which establish canons that are valid for all literature. Nor does he attain the distinction of Arnold's verse.

The broader significance of Stuart Sherman seems to be that he incarnated in himself, and recorded in his writings, a period of transition in American thought and ideals which may change the whole future history of the nation. He began with Hawthorne, Longfellow, Lowell, Holmes, as his cardinal points. He ended with the most modern of the moderns. And he incarnated each stage of the transition with immense energy and enthusiasm.

Sherman's permanent place remains undetermined — perhaps because the value of modern American writing is still undetermined. Our crusaders of modernity have discovered aspects of life, not always fine or worthy, all of which have been thoroughly canvassed in the older literatures. It is yet to be seen whether they have discovered, or will discover, anything that is genuinely new. If they add values to human life, they may open a new era of literature, and of this new era Stuart Sherman may prove to be the prophet.

CHARLES JOHNSTON

LOOKING back on the late fall season, one recalls . . . Simon and Schuster's parody of the stock-market crash, *Caught Short*, by Eddie Cantor — a small volume, modeled on *The Specialist*, which is reported to have sold 35,000 copies in record time, thus proving that, however it may hurt, some of us are still able to laugh . . . The *New York Times* refusing to run an ad of Harcourt, Brace's *Kept Woman* because they objected to the title. And Harcourt, Brace canceling what amounts to a $25,000 contract . . . Thomas Mann, the German novelist, being awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature for 1929, which prize now amounts to $46,290 . . . New York Customs authorities banning the French translation of *The Arabian Nights* by Mardrus, though they do not bar the classic in the original or in the literal English translations of Payne and Burton. A classic instance of erratic judgment.

Edward Weeks

THE ATLANTIC MONTHLY

JANUARY, 1930

THE GENIUS OF THE AVERAGE

CALVIN COOLIDGE

BY GAMALIEL BRADFORD

I

It is an immense advantage to a public man to have a reputation for silence, and the dangers of free speech to a politician have been often enough demonstrated. The Blaines, the Roosevelts, the Gladstones, have a glorious gift with the tongue, but it sometimes gets them into trouble. The Washingtons, the Clevelands, the Coolidges, thrive by silence. For the silence always suggests mystery and vast uncomprehended intellectual depths, which may be there and may not.

Calvin Coolidge was born on the fourth of July, 1872, in the little mountain village of Plymouth, Vermont. His family on both sides struck its roots right down into the heart of New England. There was the New England habit of labor, the sturdy endurance of hardship and privation, the thrift, the self-denial, the dominating conscience, the instinctive sense that all amusement was frivolous, if not dangerous. Calvin had a simple, solid education, by which he profited moderately. He went to Amherst College, studied and practised law in an office in Northampton, drifted into politics, and swept up steadily through all the political degrees from the lowest to the highest. One never tires of dwelling on the tremendous contrast between the primitive parlor in the New England farmhouse in which, by the flickering light of a kerosene lamp, the father administered to the son the presidential oath, and the palatial splendor of the residence of the greatest ruler in the world. No doubt the contrast has been always present to Mr. Coolidge himself and has always filled him with astonishment.

It cannot be said of course that this extraordinary career has been built entirely on silence. Coolidge has plenty of words at his command when they are called for. His speeches and messages show an abundant and sometimes wearisome fluency. He can say what he wants, when he wants, as he wants. But he also keeps still when he has nothing to say, and most of us would find that this left a terrible void in our habits of utterance. Furthermore, he has what has justly been called a significant silence. His complete absence of speech often suggests more than others' rippling multiplicity of words. And though no doubt Coolidge has sometimes had occasion to deplore

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his lack of small talk, he is well aware of the advantage that the habit of silence gives him, appreciates it, develops it, and has at times insisted on it with great effect. 'I have never been hurt by anything I did n't say,' he once observed.

I have long studied the photographic portrayals of Coolidge's face, though I have never seen the reality. Even with the utmost sympathy of contemplation, it is hard to find power in it. There is no suggestion of quick and eager response. It is a pinched, drawn face, certainly not hard, but anxious, the face of a man perpetually confronted by a problem a little too big for him. One thing may be said — the face has New England written all over it. It seems to me at moments that I detect some shade of the Indian strain of ancestry which biographers generally pass over, but which Mr. Coolidge himself frankly admits. The truth is, there was a strange affinity in some respects between the early Puritans and their Indian neighbors. There was the same silence, the same stoicism, the same grim and bare acceptance of hard reality. Indian or not, there is no question but that Mr. Coolidge sums up in himself these marked qualities of New England inheritance. And it seems a strange thing that, when the country as a whole has outgrown New England, has taken to laughing at it or forgetting it, an unexpected turn of fortune should have made not only a son of New England but an absolute incarnation of New England the ruler over all America.

II

It is extremely difficult to trace and analyze the finer currents and movements of intellectual and spiritual life under this habitual aloofness and remoteness; but the broader outlines may be laid down without much trouble. Coolidge's intellectual training was on the whole ample and varied. The teaching in the better country academies fifty years ago was not very broad, but it was substantial. At Amherst he came into contact with men of real originality and power and he responded to those who gave the historical and human suggestion, which was the thing that chiefly appealed to him. He was not especially concerned with facts of science or achievements of literature. But the working of human nature in history and government meant something to him, and whatever he acquired about it he instinctively stored away for future use.

It does not appear that he read much for pleasure. Novels never appealed to him at any stage of his career. He read extensively and in earlier years a considerable variety, but he probably read slowly, so that he did not cover much ground in proportion to the time spent; and as years went on, the reading was almost entirely restricted to books of history and government. He is supposed to have studied philosophy assiduously with Garman at Amherst. Garman is said to have taught him and others a remorseless regard for truth and a habit of thinking things through to the end. But I see no signs anywhere of any profound philosophical training or activity.

If Coolidge did not spend much energy on speculative scientific or philosophical thinking, his mental processes were incessantly active on his own peculiar business. One who had observed him closely and carefully states this with vigor and force: 'The universal testimony of those who know is that he is always thinking. Not mind-wandering, casual consciousness, but hard, disciplined, purposeful thinking upon his problems. He is, they say, forever thinking ahead. That is why he is never hurried, never caught off his

guard, never excited when the moment for decision and action comes.' Obviously this constant mental activity is in no way incompatible with difficulty and slowness of thought; rather it may well be a result of such conditions. But it is an undeniable characteristic of Coolidge the politician. When any situation is brought before him he works it out to the very bottom, so far as his comprehension goes, and with a minuteness of small detail sometimes astonishing to those who know both him and the subject best.

On the other hand, though Coolidge's political thinking is intense and continuous, when it comes to a question of the abstract quality of that thinking the judgment will be somewhat different. In his early days as legislator he seems to have been attracted by various reforming tendencies, but as time went on he settled more and more into a conservative attitude and became above all the proclaimer of the necessity and desirability of keeping things as they are. His political philosophy is that of the mid-nineteenth century, the optimistic ideal of democracy as the final solution of all problems and cure for all evils. If a few small evils happen not to be cured, you must shut your eyes for the time and trust in Providence. There may be still something to be urged for this theory, but it can hardly be said to denote advanced thinking from the twentieth-century point of view. It can hardly be said that Coolidge has much to do with the twentieth century.

What is interesting about Coolidge's political ideas is not only the ideas themselves, but his gift of expressing them, which is said to be one of the few things on which he prides himself. He has a singular felicitous faculty of coining brief, telling, energetic phrases that take hold of men's minds and stay in them. The sentence addressed to Gompers after the Police Strike, 'There is no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time,' will not soon fade out of American history. There are plenty of others equally notable. Such things are not only effective phrases; they bear the impress of honest, square thinking.

III

Whether it was his thoughts that did it or his words, there can be no doubt about the extraordinary, steady, unbroken rapidity of Coolidge's political progress. He once lost a contest for School Committee. Otherwise the voters have given him whatever he asked for, and almost without his asking. Beginning with minor municipal offices in Northampton, he drifted into the State legislature, as it seemed a hopelessly rural specimen. But he made his way, just by sheer faithful work. He went back to be Mayor of Northampton. Then he went to the State Senate, became its President, slipped into the Lieutenant Governorship. A little later, as Governor, the Police Strike gave him nation-wide prominence. His supporters urged him for the Presidency, but the Senatorial clique put in Harding instead, and it was left for an unexpected reaction of accident and weariness to land the Massachusetts man in the Vice Presidency. Two years later Harding's death advanced him to the highest office in the country. People smiled, and said, 'That man — President? Not for more than two years at any rate.' At the end of the two years an overwhelming vote gave him the office again, and it seems highly probable that he might have had it a third time, if he had so wished.

It is an interesting question how much of definite planning, of long ambition, went into the shaping and carry-

ing out of this career. Coolidge's ardent admirers of course insist, as always, that he had no personal ambition, but was moved solely by the desire to do his duty and be useful. There are occasional contradictions to this view, but generally speaking even close observers do not seem to detect anything but an attentive and watchful consideration of whatever opportunity might throw in his way and a most zealous and industrious habit of profiting by it.

Nor is Coolidge himself any more ready to admit long ambition than are his admirers to admit it for him. The definite and repeated refusals to neglect any immediate duty for the sake of future advancement may of course be easily reconciled with ambition and may even be regarded as a farsighted and most politic manifestation of it. But constant references in talk, in his speeches, and in his autobiographical writing seem to indicate that Coolidge never looked forward very elaborately to a cloudy ultimate goal of his career, but took each step as it came, and was long inclined to bound his hopes with rather narrow possibilities, political, or even almost locally legal.

And when he had got to the top, how much did he enjoy it? There are signs, little indications and gleams, scattered everywhere, for those who know how to read, showing that he was well aware of the dignity and the grandeur and the far-reaching power of his office. There are shy and subtle touches, as in his speech to the Boy Scouts: 'I am thrilled at the thought of my audience to-night, for I never address boys without thinking, among them may be a boy who will sit in the White House.' Yet, along with the sense of greatness, there was always the sense of the burden and the responsibility: 'It costs a great deal to be President.'

The truth is, it was not in his temperament to enjoy glory or anything else. That temperament was the inherited, cumulative, aggravated temperament of New England, in which the sense of duty is the overriding force and an uneasy conscience always suggests that we are not in this world mainly to have a good time, or even to have a good time at all, but for some higher purpose. Always there is that New England face, with all its subtle implications, and the face seems peculiarly out of keeping with merrymaking or any of the riot of set publicity, most of all with the ludicrously inappropriate decorations which were resorted to in Coolidge's Western surroundings. There is the garish cowboy rig, and in the midst of it the chilly Vermont countenance, wondering painfully and wearily what it was all about. These people were not working: why should anybody want to do anything but work?

IV

He never did, and here is the secret of his whole existence: work, unceasing, unresting, perpetual work, not so much for what was actually accomplished, but for the habit of work itself. In all the accounts of him this habit of work is emphasized, from boyhood up. Undeniably the insistence on such a very virtuous practice of industry grows wearisome, not to say even Weemsish, and one begins to speculate as to whether Coolidge was really such a hopeless prig as the Father of his Country was represented to our youth. The few stories of boyish pranks which relieve this strain — the theft of the cannon from an opposing local faction, the introduction of a donkey into forbidden precincts — are refreshing and comforting. But there is precious little of this sort of thing. The sports and amusements of boys seem to have had small appeal for the incipient Puritan,

and the sports of men had even less. He did like the circus and still does. But his father said of him as a child that he did not care for play, and he himself repeatedly admits the same thing with perfect frankness. If in later years he has taken to fishing, it would seem to be more for the gesture than for the pleasure. Certainly there is none of the passion that Grover Cleveland threw into it.

Nor does it appear that artistic, æsthetic interests and distractions have much more allurement for Coolidge than social pursuits and amusements. There is no evidence whatever that music has ever stirred or stimulated him, unless that he used to play the bones in a minstrel show. The theatre seems to be null. Painting does not count for much more, though there is one curious discussion of it which we will consider in a moment. Coolidge's admirers enlarge upon his love for nature. Unquestionably both the grim and the gracious aspects of the Vermont woodland landscape impressed their influence on that solitary and introverted boyhood, but the nature passages in Coolidge's writings seem to me thoroughly artificial and superficial, the utterance of a man who is trying to say what he ought to feel rather than what he actually felt. It is said that, though Coolidge is a great walker, he never likes to walk alone — observes, with a curious touch, that walking alone gives him a feeling which he refers to as 'a sort of naked feeling.' The real lover of nature, like any other lover, wants to be alone with the object of his affections.

Again, with poetry. Coolidge tells us, and others tell us, that at times he has read a good deal of it. But the reading appears to have been largely confined to Milton, Gray, and, above all, Longfellow and Whittier. In other words, the appreciation of the poets is mainly intellectual and moral. And the same is true of the curious discussion of painting referred to above. When the journalist, Beverley Nichols, tried to get an interview from the President, he did not succeed in starting him till modern painting was introduced. Then Coolidge gave his opinions on an exhibition at Pittsburgh, and gave them with notable clarity and originality: 'As I looked at those pictures, I felt that I could see through them, into the minds of the nations which had created them. I could see the torment out of which they had been born. If the nation's psychology was still diseased, so was its art. The traces of the neurosis were unmistakable. If, on the other hand, the nation was on the road to recovery, if its people were rediscovering the happiness which they had lost, the story was told in the picture too. . . . The only respect in which I would differ from you is that I observed as much evidence of recovery as of sickness.' Here again, you see, the interest, the impression, is wholly intellectual and moral. The purely æsthetic side does not appear at all.

So, when we dissect and analyze Coolidge's intellectual and spiritual life, we find the residuum to be simply an appalling, enthralling habit of work. The curious thing is that he does not seem really to enjoy even work. There are immense workers in whom the pure love of their occupation is so engrossing that it fills all their waking hours and makes every distraction seem dull and unprofitable merely by comparison. There is no suggestion of this state of mind in Coolidge. He works because he always worked, because his father and his grandfather worked before him and the instinct is in his blood; he works because he cannot help it. It recalls the remark which has recently been attributed to Miss Fannie Hurst in regard to her literary pursuits: 'It is not that I am happy when I am writing,

it is only that I am unhappy when I am not writing.'

However this may be, it may safely be affirmed that the essence and the explanation of Calvin Coolidge is the rooted, dominating habit of unceasing, unquestioning, orderly, systematic labor.

V

The order and the system are just as marked in private life and domestic affairs as in public. The President kept a clean desk, but so did the Northampton lawyer, and the desk at home is just as clear. This is accomplished largely by an orderly and systematic arrangement of time. Every minute of White House time is naturally provided for, but here again the habit is constitutional and has always prevailed. As a careful recorder puts it: 'The President practises the most profound reverence for the value of *time* that I have ever heard of. . . . His visitors waste little of his time. *Per contra*, he wastes none of his own by needless speech. The result is he has nearly all his time to himself.'

The same careful system is applied to matters of health, with excellent results, and again to matters of dress. Coolidge knows just what he wants to wear at each particular time, and if by any chance he fails to find it, there is trouble. One of the few recorded instances of his loss of temper is in regard to a mislaid overcoat, and such slight losses seem to spring more from infractions of order than from anything else. But, as one who knows him intimately remarked, you come to allow for these things when you understand the system of 'bitter self-control' under which the man habitually lives. Bitter self-control! Is it possible to sum up New England more neatly than that?

Nothing shows the habits of order more effectively than Coolidge's dealings with money. It goes without saying that his temperament and his stern New England training gave him a caution and prudence in such matters which no opportunity and no abundance have ever shaken. It is not niggardliness or meanness. There is a perfect readiness to spend when there is a real object in spending. But the waste of pennies he could never get used to, never has. He has the only kind of thrift that really counts — the thrift that is an instinctive habit.

And it is hardly necessary to say that such an instinctive habit is of the utmost value to a great public official. It was carried into the practical administration of the national finances, and its value here is obvious and demonstrable, however judgments may sometimes have differed about the application. But the habit was even more valuable as an example to the American people in the huge orgy of regardless extravagance which the twentieth century in general initiated and which was so immensely augmented by the effects of the Great War. Here was a man who actually looked at a dollar before he threw it away, who actually hesitated to buy any luxury that was offered to him, merely because he did not know how he was going to pay for it. It was inconceivable, it was unbelievable. Yet this man had passed from nothing to the White House, and there might be good in his ideas after all.

Also, underneath the habitual thrift you must always recognize the strong, genuine vein of humanity in Coolidge which prompted his fine saying, 'I am not trying to save money, I am trying to save people.' The humanity seems to be always working, constantly, though covertly, in the money dealings as in other things. He was ready to pinch himself. He had no inclination to pinch others. In his law business he worked hard for

his clients without much considering whether they could pay. When he was a legislator, his colleagues could get nothing out of him in words. They were often astonished to find that he had worked for their advantage when they were least aware of it. He kept up a quiet interest in the home people when he was away from them. One who had many letters from him says: 'There is n't a letter in there that is n't packed with kindness, thoughtfulness, with messages to the home folks, and with numerous reminders of his strong affection for the people of these hills themselves. . . . Nobody could read these letters and think Calvin Coolidge a cold man.'

The curious mixture of native tenderness and bitter self-control hardened into a habit shows most intimately in the domestic relations and most of all in Coolidge's relation to his father. They loved each other, they trusted each other, they admired each other. They expressed these things by little more than the 'Ugh! ugh!' of the Indian or the New Englander. On the other hand, when Coolidge comes to write of his mother, whom he lost so early, the habit of restraint makes the expression difficult and artificial, so that one quite understands the happy if harsh phrase of one of his critics who speaks of his 'congealed sentimentality.' When New England attempts sentiment at all, it is apt to be of the congealed order. With his stepmother, with whom his relations were largely practical if at the same time profoundly affectionate, it is quite different. It was not a question of words, but of actions, and his conduct toward her was admirable throughout. So in the minor domestic matters. The staff at the White House liked and respected him, even if they did not feel at ease with him, because he treated them as human beings. He treated animals like human beings, also, and his affection, his consideration, his thoughtfulness, for his dogs and cats and all other live creatures afford the usual sure evidence of a fundamentally sympathetic heart.

The mixture of tenderness with an innate dread of showing it is naturally most of all manifest in the most intimate family connections. It is impossible to imagine Coolidge lavishing demonstrative affection upon his children. Yet it is clear enough that father and sons always loved, trusted, and understood each other, and when the younger boy, Calvin, was dying, it was his profound confidence in his father that kept him alive for some time after all hope was gone.

But when you have made long and careful study of statesmen's wives, nothing can be more curious than the analysis of the relation between Calvin and Grace Coolidge. There is the intimate play of tender irony which is one of the abiding charms of conjugal existence. But underneath the surface playfulness there is the closest mutual understanding and the most perfect and most enduring interdependence. In this particular matrimonial example there is an extraordinary fullness of complementary quality, which again each perfectly understands and appreciates. Mrs. Coolidge likes, revels in, the social world, which her husband detests and avoids. He hates to talk — she loves it; and when she utters the superfluous she gives it a grace and charm which make it seem more indispensable than the necessary, as indeed no doubt it is.

When you follow the whole of Coolidge's career, you cannot help feeling how invaluable that wife must have been at every step. Nor is this in any way discounted by Mrs. Coolidge's own insistence that she never interferes in political matters. In some notable instances she professes to have been

wholly without even such information as was supplied to comparative outsiders. All the same, you feel that she was at the heart of the whole movement of the President's life, as was the case with the first Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and a hundred others whom you could name. The man would not have been what he was without the woman, and most of all precisely because of her infinite, exquisite tact in effacing herself.

VI

The interesting thing about Coolidge in his larger human relations is the strange combination of remoteness, aloofness, reserve, with such vast contact with men and women of all sorts, and even the apparent need of such contact.

As to the remoteness there can be no question: it hits you in the face everywhere. The man is by nature evasive, elusive, shy. In his boyhood he kept by himself, accepted others when he had to, but did not seek them. A well-known confession of his youth appears in a dozen more or less varying forms: 'It's always hard for me to meet people. As a boy I would shrink with fear if I heard strange voices in the home, and would sneak up the back stairs rather than meet them — I simply can't get used to it.' Thousands of New Englanders — and human beings — are made like that, but they do not usually work their way into the White House.

The evidence of others as to the reserve abundantly bears out Coolidge's own. 'The fact is,' said Judge Field, 'that Calvin is shy. He dislikes the limelight. He hates to have his picture taken. He is an extraordinarily shy man and always was. The only thing that overcomes his shyness is his work.' And the general spiritual attitude is summed up in the comment of one who knew him well: 'He is the loneliest man upon earth.'

The acme, the climax, of Coolidge's remoteness and reserve, of his asocial quality, is indisputably his utter disregard of conversation as mankind in general practises it. There are men who cannot talk even when they wish to. Coolidge can talk freely enough, but talk for talk's sake means nothing to him. If he wants to get information, he will pelt you, storm you, with a string of questions for half an hour on end. Then he has done with you, and you may go. The ordinary small talk of the world, its trivial gossip, drifts by him, slips over him, like the idle wind. He stands silent, apart, absorbed in his thoughts, and wonders how people can chatter so, and why they should.

The most extraordinary, the almost incredible, example of Coolidge's conversational habits is the story told by a competent witness of his sending for a friend, apparently for conference. Thinking he was wanted for his counsel, the friend hastened to answer the summons. He was ushered in from the waiting room. 'How d'ye do?' said the President. 'Sit down.' The friend sat. The President sat — and looked out the window. After fifteen minutes of silence the friend rose to go. 'Don't go. Sit down,' said the President. After twenty minutes more of silence the friend rose to go. 'Don't go; sit down,' said the President. Another twenty minutes of silence. The friend arose: 'I guess you did n't want me for anything, so I'll be going.' The President's reply was: 'Thank you for coming. I wanted to think.' Coolidge is sometimes described as an average man, and so in a sense he is. The average man might like to behave in this fashion, but he rarely does.

The element of humor may be taken as a minor aspect of Coolidge's conversational proclivities. Humor is

sometimes denied him. And social laughter — laughter as a mere solvent, lubricant — he does not indulge in or require. But he has plenty of hard, dry, subtle wit, which may cause laughter in others, and innumerable instances of it are cited. Perhaps the best comment of all on the subject is Coolidge's plaintive remark, 'Whenever I do indulge my sense of humor, it always gets me into trouble.'

With these general social characteristics it is hardly to be expected that the loneliest man on earth should have many intimate friends. Evidently he has not, but those he has he clings to. The humble friends of his youth, like the Northampton cobbler, Lucey, remain his friends through everything. Perhaps it is better in the end not to have it said of you that you pick up endless acquaintances and throw them off when you have no more need of them, but rather that you 'practically never lose a friend.'

Another phase of the human relations is the question how far the influence of others has figured and made itself felt in Coolidge's life and character. Evidently some human contacts affected him profoundly, especially in early life. His father's influence and example went deep. The teaching of the Amherst professors, notably Garman in philosophy, on which Coolidge himself enlarges so much, took a solid and enduring hold. But of influence in the sense of effecting immediate result there seems to have been remarkably little, early or late. Coolidge listened to what everybody had to say, and then took his own course. Above all, no human being could ever boast that he was the President's accredited adviser or that a special line of action was suggested or initiated by him.

An equal curiosity attaches to the point of Coolidge's influence over others, doubly curious because it seems as if he were the last man who would have anything of the sort. There was never what is called magnetism about him, the enthralling personal hold of a Blaine or a Roosevelt. There was nothing of the cordial, back-slapping, drink-partaking politician, nothing whatever. Yet somehow he got the votes, somehow he got and held the confidence of the vast majority of the American people.

This was partly owing to his immense quiet observation of men, both individually and in masses. He saw everything and he remembered everything, at any rate everything that would serve his purpose. His judgment of men and their actions was not infallible, but it was keen, and it was always working. And on this judgment was founded an extraordinary political tact and skill. He knew what to say and do and just when to say it and do it. To be sure, he was cautious and deliberate in such action, and sometimes the extremity of caution exposed him to severe criticism, as with his apparent delay in the Police Strike, and again in getting rid of the dubious relics of the Harding Administration, and yet again as to the nomination in 1928. But even here good observers insist that the wisdom of his course was repeatedly justified by the event.

Finally, there is the question of how much Coolidge has really achieved politically. It must be admitted that he is not a great creative, constructive executive. He himself is said to have observed, in 1928, that it was now time for constructive statesmanship and that his own services had not been of this order and probably could not be. As I have indicated earlier, before the burden of direct governing had been laid upon him he showed a good deal of interest in progressive and for that day radical projects, and took hold of such things with the zeal and thoroughness

that marked him in everything, so that he gained enduring credit with even labor leaders and radicals for fairness and honesty, as in the settlement of the Lawrence strike. But when he went into executive office he became more and more impressed with the immense importance of administration, and declared that it was imperative to give it a chance to catch up with legislation. And this idea seems to have possessed him more and more.

Is it not, after all, a wise and fruitful idea? Is not the failure in administration more than anything else responsible for the growing distrust of democracy everywhere? A hundred years ago it was assumed that the ballot would make over the world. The world has the ballot, and it needs making over more than ever. You have not only got to have the ballot, you have got to have some means of giving the will of the majority governmental effect — that is, you have got to have efficient administration. It is precisely the lack of this which has made parliamentarism a laughingstock everywhere. It was the lack of efficient administration that brought Italy to the benevolent despotism of Mussolini and Russia to the despotic benevolence of Lenin. In view of these things, perhaps, as time goes on, the teachings and the methods of Calvin Coolidge may not prove so futile after all.

VII

There has been endless speculation as to the causes of Coolidge's success. The astonishing contrast between the homely simplicity of the man and the swiftness and smoothness of his political progress makes such speculation inevitable. But his case is only a critical instance of the puzzles that attend practical success and above all political success in general. Why is it that again and again we see brains, power, natural gifts, and even genius, apparently slighted, disregarded, and pushed into a corner, while complacent mediocrity makes its way to the top almost without effort? Sometimes it almost seems as if leaders succeed quite as much by what they have not as by what they have, and one may meditate long and deeply on Dr. Johnson's remark that 'men please more upon the whole by negative qualities than by positive.' The more one studies Coolidge, however, the more one comes to feel the truth of the excellent prize editorial by Mr. Frank W. Buxton, on 'What Made Calvin Coolidge,' to the effect that while many interesting persons and many strange chances may have had a hand in Coolidge's advancement, the main figure in that advancement was Calvin Coolidge himself.

Most of all what has made Calvin Coolidge is the fact that he is an average man appealing to average men. The average man has the votes, and if you win him the votes will come to you. Perhaps the best way to win him is to make him feel that you are altogether different, but assuredly the next best is to make him feel that you are exactly the same. The common people early came to see in Coolidge one of themselves. They saw a man with their traits, their habits, their interests, their social surroundings, and this man kept all these things unaltered in his steady progress from the bottom to the top. Observing this, the average man said: 'Here is one just like me, who has made his way to the White House. It is immensely agreeable, flattering, encouraging; let us keep him there.'

Moreover, as has been aptly suggested, the average American saw in Coolidge just the virtues that were supposed to constitute the American ideal and supposed to have made America. Coolidge incarnated thrift, self-denial, plain and simple living,

straightforward, hard-headed honesty. The average American had heard that his fathers had these virtues and had made a great nation by means of them. He saw with a sigh that he had not much taste for them himself, and that his children had much less than he; but there was all the more reason why he should turn to a President who embodied them completely.

In Heine's study of Shakespeare's Cleopatra there is a brilliant portrayal of the contrast between the dark, solemn, austere, mysterious, dreary land of Egypt and the gay, frivolous, trifling Parisian harlot who ruled over it. It would be possible to make an equally effective contrast between the mad, hurrying, chattering, extravagant, self-indulgent harlotry of twentieth-century America and the grave, silent, stern, narrow, uncomprehending New England Puritanism of Calvin Coolidge. And Heine caps his climax with the exquisite comment, '*Wie witzig ist Gott!*'

VIII

Not the least interesting question that arises in connection with this long and complicated career is the question just how far Coolidge analyzes and understands himself. There may of course be depths of self-interrogation and self-study which are not apparent, but such depths are not indicated or even suggested in any written or reported words that have come under my eye. Certainly anyone who hopes to find them in the autobiography written at the instance of the popular magazines will be woefully disappointed, for a more unrevealing document has rarely been produced with any such pretension. Nine tenths of it is a rehearsal of surface facts easily accessible elsewhere and the remainder, instead of being an honest search into the man's own character and motives, is merely an effort to portray such a boyhood and manhood as a future President ought to be expected to have. The whole story is in the main a compound of superficial, trivial narrative and the congealed sentimentality already suggested. Every word of it shows the deadly influence of the popular magazine, and the only question is whether the writer is trying desperately to write down to that level or whether the level is one that comes natural to him, either alternative being sufficiently unpleasant.

I find little evidence in Coolidge anywhere of an abstract general interest in the analysis of human motives. Now and then there is an interesting and suggestive touch, as in the remark in the autobiography, 'In public life it is sometimes necessary in order to appear really natural to be actually artificial,' or the still more striking comment on the political mind. But usually the emphasis is placed rather upon action than upon motive, and the undeniably acute judgment of men seems to be more a matter of instinct than of elaborate analysis: perhaps it is all the more practically valuable on that account.

So, it is not to be expected that one who does not analyze others should analyze himself, and such analysis seems to be conspicuously lacking in Coolidge. We have already seen his attitude toward his own ambition. If he has been actuated by long dreams and vast desires and purposes, he is not himself aware of it, or in such comment as he does make disclaims it industriously. There is no clear attempt to analyze his own abilities, or the nature or the working of them. There is an apparently genuine modesty in regard to them, and especially a naïve astonishment that he could have got so far with any powers that he knows of: that is all. On the other hand, there is no particular consciousness of weakness

or defect. I have referred to the admission of a lack of constructive statesmanship, but in regard to neither this nor any other insufficiency does there seem to be any marked appreciation of being inadequate to any office that may come to him. Fate or some higher power has put him in these places; it is the affair of the same higher power to see that he is equal to them. And a similar complacency shows in his curious, at any rate apparent, indifference to criticism. Every President is abused with a variety and virulence of savage attack which it would seem as if no sensitive spirit could endure, and even some very tough spirits have shriveled and withered under it. It appears to have little effect on Calvin Coolidge. He is doing his best, and no man can do more: why should he care?

In short, the sense of occasional failure, of discouragement, of disappointment, which inevitably comes with imaginative obsession by a high ideal, seems to be altogether absent from Coolidge's make-up. The highs and lows of life are taken as they come, without disturbance of sleep or digestion. There is not one trace or hint of that fascinating, inexplicable, haunting melancholy which makes the distinction of Abraham Lincoln, though Coolidge and Lincoln have been often compared. In one of the most striking passages of Renan's history he cuts down to the root of such melancholy: 'A trait which characterizes great men of European stock,' he says, 'is that at moments they become followers of Epicurus; they are overcome with dissatisfaction and disgust when they are toiling with the utmost ardor, and after they have succeeded they doubt whether the cause they have labored for was worth so many sacrifices.' There is nothing of this vague depression in Coolidge, nothing of such spiritual reaction and recoil. Instead, there is a persistent, insistent, certainly not buoyant, but aggressive and almost tediously reiterated optimism, which seems partly physical in its nature, and which always suggests a more or less conventional and traditional habit and attitude of mind.

We have already observed such a conventional attitude in Coolidge's political thinking. It is even more marked and obvious in his thinking on religious matters. And his preoccupation with such matters is everywhere prominent. Turn over his writings and speeches, and on page after page you will come across a religious allusion of some kind. America is under the special protection of divine power. Democracy is divinely ordained for the salvation of mankind, and all the forces of the universe are working with it. Perhaps no passage better sums up the whole attitude than a paragraph from the Boy Scout address: 'It is hard to see how a great man can be an atheist. . . . We need to feel that behind us is intelligence and love. Doubters do not achieve; skeptics do not contribute; cynics do not create. Faith is the great motive power, and no man realizes his full possibilities unless he has the deep conviction that life is eternally important, and that his work, well done, is a part of an unending plan.'

It is impossible to question the absolute sincerity and profound conviction of this religious attitude. It is not only believed but lived, and no man ever carried his convictions into his life with more fervent and reverent piety than Calvin Coolidge. But the attitude is simply that of the Christian, not to say Fundamentalist, orthodoxy of the middle nineteenth century, or earlier. It is the unshaken belief in an anthropomorphic God, who guides the destinies of nations and also the petty affairs of individuals, and to whom it is of real importance what you or I or Calvin

Coolidge may do or not do. Behind such a deity is a future, perhaps unending, existence, in which all the inequalities of this world, riches and poverty, brains and dullness, will be amply adjusted and compensated, and in which again you, and I, and Calvin Coolidge will richly receive the reward of all our labor and endurance here.

Now this matter of religion, with Calvin Coolidge, is not a side issue. It is vital. On the theological fabric outlined above hangs the whole tissue and scheme of the Coolidge type of thinking and living — political, social, economic, and moral. If the theological fabric withers and collapses, what will you do then? Apparently for Coolidge it never has collapsed. But for millions of his fellow Americans there is very little of it left, and in consequence they demand a readjustment of the universe with which Calvin Coolidge can hardly provide them.

THE THEORY OF CENSORSHIP

BY WILLIAM ALLAN NEILSON

I

THE question of literary and dramatic censorship is not at the moment merely an annoying perplexity in the life of a single city, but is an issue which concerns the whole country. Its emergence is frequently regarded as a particular instance of an anti-liberal tendency appearing in a great variety of forms throughout the nation, and it is highly important that despite its difficulty we should seek to see clearly what principles are implied in the suppression of books and other forms of expression, and whether these are in harmony with common sense and the ideas which lie at the basis of our social structure.

In spite of recent tendencies in legislation and public opinion we still assume, remembering the confessions of faith on which the republic was founded, that we believe in human liberty. The majority still holds, theoretically at least, that for the highest development of an individual or a community a large degree of freedom is necessary. Most of us would also agree that, in particular questions of the restriction of liberty, the burden of proof is on him who would restrict. Yet it is also agreed that for the preservation of liberty itself certain restrictions are necessary. The nuisance of the radio in the apartment house or at the open window is an obvious instance of this, since the right to make a noise may conflict with the right to enjoy quiet. The problem, then, is not one to be solved by a simple statement of general principles, but by a consideration of how and when the principles, once agreed upon, apply.

I believe that on many matters concerned with censorship there is a larger degree of unanimity than is generally supposed, but that a lack of explicitness has confused the public mind and unnecessarily multiplied antagonisms. The present paper aims

not at making a novel contribution but at extricating from the confusion the accepted truths, in the hope that the remaining points of difference may be seen more clearly and perhaps brought nearer to reconciliation.

II

To begin with, we ought to know whether in applying censorship we are considering the welfare of the adolescent or the adult. No one disputes the necessity of different measures in dealing with the mature and with the immature, since, apart from a few extremists, all our educational measures take for granted that the young must be guarded from risks that may inflict injury before experience has been acquired and before reason has been developed to the point where the significance of the risks can be appreciated. So, in the case of certain types of literature, plays, and pictures, it is justifiable and probably necessary to seek to prevent the young from being exposed to them while their imaginations are highly impressionable and their self-control is undeveloped.

The exercise of measures for this end is a matter mainly for parents and teachers rather than for the police, since what books can be put into the hands of boys or girls, or what plays they should be taken to see, is largely an individual matter dependent less upon mere age than upon degree of development and manner of upbringing. For adolescents who are beyond the control of parents or teachers, the question is more difficult. Even in the days before the Eighteenth Amendment, we enforced laws against sales of liquor to minors, and I suppose similar laws could be made in connection with sales of books and admission to plays. But I should urge the weighing of two considerations in this connection. First, keeping an undesirable book out of the hands of a young boy or girl is an affair requiring much tact, and persuasion is usually better than compulsion or threats of punishment. Otherwise we simply add the attraction of forbidden fruit and challenge the child to outwit us. Secondly, the attempt to save our children from what we regard as dangerous knowledge is likely in our times to be a locking of the stable door after the steed is stolen. It is my impression that most freshmen (of both sexes) come to college to-day already familiar to the point of losing interest with many of the facts and ideas which anxious parents are terror-stricken lest they acquire. And not only are they familiar with them, but they seem to have acquired a kind of immunity which leaves them quite as fresh and unspoiled as their ignorantly innocent parents were at their age. The policy of 'Hush, hush!' is seldom effective, and may, indeed, produce precisely the opposite result to that intended.

III

When we turn from the protection of adolescents to the problem of the adult, a quite different point of view is imposed, though certain prohibitions still seem to be justifiable. The adult has a right to be protected against the display of offensive print or pictures where he cannot avoid them. The covers of books and magazines, and still more posters, are a fair subject for police control, since it is practically impossible not to have them thrust upon one's notice. Nor is the risk of poor judgment in selecting those to be suppressed an important one. One cannot honestly pretend that even a mistakenly rigorous policy in such matters would deprive the world of either truth or beauty to a noticeable

degree. The principle embodied in the pure-food law might also be invoked with regard to 'blurbs' and other advertising matter intended to mislead the purchaser of books or theatre tickets. The worst of such tend sometimes to exaggerate, sometimes to hide, the wickedness of the volume or the play or picture; but in any case the law which already seeks to enforce honesty in advertising might well be carried farther into the field.

The opposition to the activity of the censor, however, has not been roused by attempts to save the sensibilities of the public from the outrages of the poster or the jacket. It has been due to the feeling that some branch of the government — post office, customs official, police, or mayor — has sought to save us without our consent from what it considered a demoralizing book or play. The resentment is due to what seems to many an officious intrusion, an interference with the responsibility of the adult individual for his own moral welfare.

The case of the opposition has been strengthened by a number of considerations which, while not of the essence of the question, have made the censorship fatuous as well as annoying. Most detached observers would think it self-evident that the various agencies chosen by the law for the exercise of a difficult and delicate function could hardly have been more unfortunately selected. They would suppose that it is the business of the post office to carry mail, and that officials chosen for this purpose have no inherent fitness as judges of art or morals; that it is the business of the customs officer to collect revenue and prevent smuggling, not to pass on the value of Voltaire or Rabelais; that a policeman's duty makes demands on his courage, judgment, and loyalty, but ought not to be enlarged to include literary or dramatic criticism. In these suppositions most people would agree, and it is hardly worth while to insist on them.

Again the effect of attempted suppression has not been such as to raise the prestige of the censors. It is now manifest that no advertisement is so effective in giving a book a nation-wide sale as its prohibition in a large city. Thus, though it may be argued that, since any such prohibition ought to be a reflection of a dominant public opinion, censorship ought to be in the hands of local governments, exercise of it by a local government stimulates its sale outside and does not prevent surreptitious importation on a large scale.

The statutes of Massachusetts, where the question under discussion is being most violently debated at the moment, contribute another argument to the opposition's case, since they make legal the condemnation of a book on the basis of detached passages. Time was when the Commonwealth was proud of its reputation of leadership in scholarship; but there is no greater sin in the decalogue of scholarship than that of the ignoring of the context. Yet, when a modest attempt was made to amend the statute, the legislature voted to continue a practice in the highest degree unscholarly, unjust, and dishonest.

The absurdities of the customs censorship have been most effectively exposed by Senator Cutting of New Mexico in a recent debate, and he succeeded in inducing the Senate to relieve our revenue officers from an impossible duty as far as concerned the morality of literary works. He was less successful in connection with works supposed seditious, and apparently it will still be possible for the question whether professors of government and economics can obtain copies of the works of Karl Marx or of Lenin for

examination in their classrooms to be settled on the wharves of New York.

These absurdities in the administration of censorship serve only to strengthen the independent thinker's resentment against the essence of the practice. The saving of a man's soul, which one must presume is the object of the censorship, is after all a man's own affair, and is not to be achieved by external compulsion or guardianship. It is of a man's free will that he buys a ticket for a play or borrows a book from the library. If he wants to pander to the lower side of his nature, no censor will prevent him.

Such arguments sometimes lead defenders of the censorship to abandon the strictly moral issue and seek a basis for suppression on æsthetic grounds. But it is clear that these give no firmer footing. The whole question of standards in art is dragged in, and it becomes evident that the result of decisions on the ground of good or bad art could only be the legalizing of the timid and conventional, and the blocking of all progress by the suppression of innovation and experiment. The fact that my personal taste is offended does not give me the right to interfere with my neighbor's choice of reading or of plays, unless he insists on reading aloud in my presence or forcing me to the theatre.

A variant of the æsthetic argument is that which advocates prohibition of a production because it deals with disease. The pathological, we are told, is no fit subject for art. But no one really believes in a principle that would prohibit *Hamlet*, *Lear*, and *Macbeth* because all three interest us in madness.

IV

There are doubtless other principles involved in this difficult matter, and I shall be glad if this attempt to draw out those most obvious provokes a more capable analyst to complete the task. In doing so he must find the ground for depriving the adult citizen of the privilege of choosing his own books and his own plays and pictures, he must find a method of selecting censors wise enough to suppress only what is really demoralizing without stifling progress and experiment, and he must hit upon a device which will prevent banning a book or play from advertising it. And, lest he think that it is safer to err on the side of suppression than on the side of freedom, let him remember that it is through freedom and not through compulsion that the human spirit gains in power and reach.

'Under what precise set of conditions,' writes Sir Walter Raleigh of the novels of Fielding, 'and exactly by what persons, he is to be read is a question that need trouble no one long. Books are written to be read by those who can understand them; their possible effect on those who cannot is a matter of medical rather than of literary interest. Some literary critics, it is true, with a taste for subdued tones in art, have found some of Fielding's loudest notes too strident for enfeebled ears, but not to the great musician can the whole range of the orchestra, not to the great painter can the strongest contrast of colours, profitably be denied.'

THE PRACTICE OF CENSORSHIP

BY EDWARD WEEKS

I

LIVING, as I do, in what Alexander Woollcott impatiently termed 'that nasty and silly city of Boston' and deriving my livelihood from publishing, I am naturally sensitive on the subject of book censorship. In itself censorship is an impatient theme, and when it calls for a law so unjust and an enforcement so unhappy as that in operation in Suffolk County (which contains the city of Boston) one is apt to follow Mr. Woollcott's example and lose one's temper. For two years I have served on committees which have endeavored to reform the Massachusetts laws 'relating to obscene literature.' In the course of this service I have come into close contact with the actual practice of censorship and have gained, perhaps, more than a parochial perspective of the whole vexed question.

In a little over two years sixty-eight books have been suppressed in Boston. Only two of this number — *The American Tragedy*, by Theodore Dreiser, and *Oil*, by Upton Sinclair — were brought to trial. The other sixty-six were thought to be subject to the present Massachusetts statute, and so, according to the strict letter of the law, they may have been. Complaints, however, were lodged against them only in Suffolk County, where, in most cases, they were promptly withdrawn from sale; but, since officials throughout the other districts of the Commonwealth did not feel called on to take any action, we have the anomalous situation of books being banned in Boston yet being sold openly in Cambridge, only three miles away.

But Boston is not alone in her trouble. In the fall of 1928 the officials of the United States Customs Bureau and the postal authorities held a conference, as a result of which 739 books were blacklisted from importation into this country. Of these books, 379 were written in the Spanish language, 231 were in French, 5 were in Italian, 10 were in German, and the remaining 114 were in English. I shall take up the list in greater detail later.

We should also remember that at the request of the Home Secretary English publishers last winter withdrew two recent novels, *Sleeveless Errand* and *The Well of Loneliness*, both of which, as the sequel showed, were pure enough for circulation in the United States. In Ireland a new censorship law is being invoked which, if it is passed, will remove from circulation those books which 'tend to inculcate principles contrary to public morality,' and, as though to exemplify their object, private citizens and public associations — armed with revolvers — have been seizing and burning such radical journals as the London *Observer* and the London *Sunday Times*. Blasco Ibañez, the Spanish novelist, — author of *The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, — died recently in exile for having dared to criticize the authorities in Spain. The Soviet Government on coming into power condemned Russian classics — Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, and others —

which but a few decades earlier had been suppressed by the Tsarist Government for being too revolutionary. And what do you think would happen to a citizen of Rome who undertook to write a biography of Mussolini in the modern manner?

Such evidence could be gathered from almost any civilized age and country; it is, I am sure, sufficiently strong to demonstrate that censorship wherever it exists is as much a problem for the police as for the critics. And, like the poor, it is always with us. In times of stress — such as the late war — it is practised with a rigorous hand and accepted with little complaint. In times of peace, policing is relaxed, and then, as in the present day, we have pause in which to revive our confidence in free speech. Despite the exigencies of war, however, it is our duty as citizens to see that our laws relating to obscene — and other — literature are as just and discriminating as wisdom can provide.

Frankly, I am only distantly interested in the Continental censors, but the censorship laws of England and the United States — which bear, it seems to me, a marked resemblance to each other, and which lately have begun to strike so close to home — interest me enormously. I should like to consider them separately with the hope of deriving, first, an explanation of their vagaries, and then, perhaps, a solution to the problem that has come to trouble so many of us.

II

In England the proceedings against books are taken under Lord Campbell's Act[1] 'for more effectually preventing the sale of obscene books, pictures, prints and other articles.' Introduced in 1857, this Act was regarded as a mere police measure. *Little Dorrit* was published in that year and *The Tale of Two Cities* two years later. This was not an age in which outspokenness on delicate matters was either encouraged or allowed. Desmond MacCarthy tells us that the Act aroused little interest among literary men; Disraeli, Macaulay, and Bulwer-Lytton, the leading men of letters in politics, were silent. The *Athenæum* took no notice of it. Its prime object was the suppression of a trade in obscene books and pictures which flourished at that time, particularly in Hollywell Street, London. When Lord Campbell introduced the bill — now an Act — into the House of Lords, he said that 'the measure was intended to apply exclusively to works written for the single purpose of corrupting the morals of youth and of a nature calculated to shock the common feelings of decency in any well-regulated mind.' Debate ensued. But at a later meeting the noble lord said that

> since he last addressed them he had received information of a most appalling nature with regard to the sale of these publications; but . . . for decency's sake he would not dwell upon them. But he held in his hand a volume which would give their lordships a notion of what was going forward. It was by Dumas the Younger and was called *The Lady of the Camellias.*

La Dame aux Camélias was too much for the House and they passed the bill.

Under this Act the first step is a

[1] The vital clause in that Act runs as follows: 'If upon complaint there is any reason to believe that any obscene books, etc., are kept in any house or other place, for the purpose of sale or distribution, and upon proof that one or more such articles has been sold or distributed in connexion with such a place, justices may, upon being satisfied that such articles are of such a character and description that the publication of them would be a misdemeanour and proper to be prosecuted as such, order by special warrant that such articles shall be seized, and after summoning the occupier of the house, the same or other justices may, if they are satisfied that the articles seized are of the character stated in the warrant, and have been kept for the purpose aforesaid, order them to be destroyed.' — AUTHOR

complaint made before a magistrate that an obscene book is being sold. The magistrate, if he is of opinion that the book is obscene and is being sold and that the 'publication of the book is a misdemeanor and proper to be prosecuted as such,' makes an order for the seizure of the book. The vendors, or publishers, are summoned to appear and show cause why the article should not be destroyed. After hearing the parties, the magistrate makes his order, which is subject to appeal to the Quarter Sessions. It is clear from the wording that it is not sufficient to prove that a book is obscene in order to justify its destruction. The phrase I have quoted above is a clear direction to the magistrate not to condemn a book because he is shocked by it himself, but to ask himself what conclusion a jury ought to reach after hearing all that could be urged in the publisher's defense. In the end, however, he must come back to his own personal reactions to the book in his endeavor to answer the question, 'Is it likely to corrupt?' Fortunately English justices are notably conscientious.

Though this Act had its origin in an age far less outspoken than our own, thanks to the sapience of English law it has never proved as burdensome as the censorship laws in the United States, which came, as it were, from the same family tree. In the past year Lord Campbell's Act was, as I have said, successful in suppressing two recent English novels. Two is a paltry number when compared to the Massachusetts black list of 68 or the Customs library of 739, and I might point out in further extenuation that one at least of these two dealt with a homosexual theme. Finally, let me emphasize the fact that by the law the censorship is reposed in the hands of a jurist supposedly — and often actually — of high intelligence. The magistrate in the recent case which I have mentioned was Sir Chartres Biron, who is, I understand, an extremely well-read man and a writer as well as a lawyer of note.

III

There are several departments of the United States Government which take an interest in censorship. There is the Post Office Department, the Copyright Office, and the Customs Bureau, which is a subdivision of the Treasury Department. But it is the vigilance of the Post Office and the Customs which needs seriously concern us here.

Up till 1873 there had been vigorous objections to granting to the Post Office the power of excluding matter from the mails, but in that year Anthony Comstock secured the Postal Censorship Law. Thenceforth, obscene matter was to be excluded from the mails together with lotteries, explosives, and innumerable frauds of the Get-Rich-Quick Wallingford character. The Law is administered by Federal postmasters who need not appeal to the verdict of a jury. They act simply on their own discretion, and it is extremely difficult to secure review of what is done. Naturally, such censorship has had an eccentric career. At various times and in various places a number of magazines, among them the *Little Review*, *Life*, the *New Masses*, *Physical Culture*, *Hearst's Magazine*, and the *American Mercury*, have been barred from the mails.

One postmaster barred a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* intended for a professor of Johns Hopkins. Another, more recently, interrupted the passage of a publisher's catalogue which listed an edition of the *Decameron*. Tolstoy's *Kreutzer Sonata* was excluded by the New York post office in 1890. Swedenborg's *Amor Conjugalis*, published in 1768, was excluded by the Philadelphia

post office in 1909; and in 1911 postal authorities excluded from the mails the official vice report of the city of Chicago. In 1922 an edition of the *Decameron* was confiscated by the Cincinnati post office, and for having it in his possession a bookseller was later fined one thousand dollars by the district judge. Surely it is apparent that policing of this sort, when it is entrusted — as it must be — to men of moderate, or less than moderate, literary discrimination, is little short of absurd.

The censorship of the Customs Bureau is, it seems to me, less eccentric in its evolution and much more in keeping with the changes which have occurred in some of our states. In 1842 Congress passed the first law giving customs clerks the right of censorship. Like Lord Campbell's Act, this law was originally aimed at pornographic literature and pictures. Its first terms were mild: —

> Section 28: — That the importation of all indecent and obscene prints, paintings, lithographs, engravings and transparencies is hereby prohibited.

The tariff laws of 1890 and 1894 amended this to read: —

> That all persons are prohibited from importing into the United States from any foreign country any obscene book, pamphlet, paper, writing, advertisement, circular, print, picture, drawing, or other representation, figure or image, etc., etc., etc.

But it was not until 1909 or thereabouts that people realized that the law could be construed in ways which would bar out various pieces of art and literature not previously excluded. In 1909 an attempt was made under this section to prevent the Field Museum from importing Chinese pictures and manuscripts, very important to them, on the ground that they were obscene.

Not to multiply examples *ad nauseam*, let us come down directly to the conference between the Customs Bureau and the postal authorities which was held in the autumn of 1928, and of which brief mention has already been made. As you will remember, a black list the size of a considerable library emerged from this meeting. Further works were added to it in April 1929. As one reads over the horrid roll one is struck, first, by the curious discrimination which seems to have been made against the Spanish tongue. *Mademoiselle de Maupin*, by Gautier, is allowed by the censors to enter the country in its original print and in English translation, but in Spanish it is forbidden. The same is true for the *Mémoires* of Brantôme. Pietro Aretino, the sixteenth-century Italian, is admitted when he speaks his original tongue or is translated into English, but in Spanish dress he is forbidden. On the other hand, *The Arabian Nights* in its literal English translations by Payne and Burton is perfectly passable, but when it has been translated into French by Mardrus it is a book no American citizen can touch. Finally, such books as the novels of Balzac, the *Confessions* of Rousseau, and the works of Voltaire and Rabelais have been declared ineligible to enter the country under this provision in the Tariff Act.

Two recent episodes add their humor to the situation. In February 1929, 13 copies of Voltaire's *Candide* destined for use in a Harvard classroom were confiscated by a customs official on their entry into Boston. A protest was entered and the decision referred back, presumably, to a higher expert in Washington. But it was not till August that the books were released. The classroom, of course, by that time was empty. In April 1929, a copy of Rabelais being imported by the book collector A. Edward Newton of Philadelphia was confiscated by a New York

customs inspector 'acting under Section 305-A of the Tariff Act.' In his letter of protest to the Customs Mr. Newton wrote in part as follows: —

> The action of your representative is positively glorious! Rabelais is one of the world's classics: it is no more obscene than are Shakespeare and the English Bible. In order that you may not be the laughing-stock of the world, I beg that the volume be sent to me immediately; but for no other reason, for one can secure a copy at any well-ordered bookshop or library in the United States.
>
> I am not a youth seeking to gloat, surreptitiously, over a smutty book, but a student of mature years, the possessor of an important library, and the author of *The Amenities of Book Collecting, A Magnificent Farce, Doctor Johnson — A Play, The Greatest Book in the World* (a study of the Bible), *This Book-Collecting Game.* Moreover, I have a copy of the first edition of Rabelais, which is worth several thousand dollars.
>
> If you keep or destroy my Rabelais, it will be in my power to make you and your department ridiculous the world over. This would afford me much greater pleasure than the possession of the book.

But Mr. Newton's Rabelais has not yet been returned. Deputy Commissioner J. D. Nevius is the man who reads and passes on suspected literature. Remember his name. 'What a name to fill the speaking trump of future fame!'

It is such absurdities as these, practised alike by the designated censors of the Customs Bureau and the Post Office, that have led Senator Bronson Cutting of New Mexico to propose an amendment to this section of the Tariff Act.

In a debate that furnishes some excellent reading to the *Congressional Record*, Senator Cutting declared his opposition to that section of the present tariff law which I have quoted above and he protested just as vigorously against the wording of the new Tariff Act now under discussion, which, in addition to its charge against 'obscene literature,' goes to the further extreme of forbidding the importation of 'any book, pamphlet, paper, writing, advertisement, circular, print, picture or drawing containing any matter advocating or urging treason, insurrection or forcible resistance to any law of the United States.' If we may judge by the first vote, there is strong sentiment on his side.

The Postal Censorship Law, as I have said, was originated by Anthony Comstock, the head of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. It was one of his weapons in a long and notorious crusade against what he considered to be indecent literature. The censorship of the Customs Bureau, on the other hand, was originated for the purpose of suppressing pornographic pictures and writing, and only through long usage has it come to be applied to all manner of books, many of them classics read and respected the world over. There is ample evidence to show that such bureaucratic censorship is erratic, ill-considered, and unjust; and there is ample evidence to show that censors once placed in authority will rigorously prosecute their charge, if only to justify their appointment.

IV

Senator Cutting has insisted that each state should be permitted to determine for itself the books its people may read. This, it seems to me, is recommended not only by the Constitution but by common sense, but obviously it means that we shall have to take great care in the wording of our particular laws 'relating to obscene literature.' An eminent jurist has said that legislation is 'a compromise between articulate minorities,' and though he was not speaking of censorship, the truth of his words is

clearly brought out by the history of this troublesome subject.

If I read them aright, the early state laws in regard to obscene prints and publications were, as in England, framed with the express purpose of suppressing deliberate pornography. The word 'obscene' runs like a refrain in every one of them and I wish to point out that it is an imponderable word. Lawyers, when they have tried to convey its meaning, have generally followed the decision of Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, that 'the test of obscenity is this, whether the tendency of the matter charged as obscenity is to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences.'

But, though we may not easily pin it down, there is no doubt that many of us employ the word as if we were sure of what it means. In 1873 a group of prominent New York citizens, among whom were William E. Dodge, Jr., Morris K. Jesup, and J. Pierpont Morgan, organized the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. It was organized under a special act of the State Legislature and its guiding light was, of course, Anthony Comstock. The agents of the Society were given the rights of search, seizure, and arrest. The idea was contagious, and in a few years the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice, the New England Watch and Ward Society, and, in England, the National Vigilance Association were in existence. Vigilance committees may be necessary to a frontier society, but I contend that their interference is hardly called for in a cultured community which once was supposed to cradle liberty. Paternalism is out of favor to-day, and I believe there are many of us who object to the purpose of such organizations and who cannot approve of their actions. Granting that they perform a service in quietly ridding city life of some of its apparent contamination, yet the fact remains that their ferreting policy is out of keeping with the best American law and custom. The Watch and Ward Society is the only one to come under my observation; I have it on their authority that ninety per cent of their activity is devoted to matters other than censorship and I understand that of the sixty-eight books now suppressed in my state only eleven were subject to their complaint. But by the very threat of their action they constitute themselves the unofficial censors of the Commonwealth. This is strong criticism; I do not mean it to be harsh. For as a citizen I feel under definite obligation to the Society for its devoted and highly disagreeable work in suppressing pornography and for its war upon the contamination of the red-light districts.

Unfortunately, in their zeal to run down and destroy Paris post cards, filthy pictures, and smutty pamphlets, — which still seem to circulate among adolescents, — the Society has also felt it incumbent upon them to act as the unofficial censors of what our adults shall read; and unfortunately, as I see it, the present Massachusetts statute is a ready weapon for such a crusade. Section 28 of Chapter 272 of the Massachusetts General Laws has been frequently modified. Its present wording — for which, I believe, the Watch and Ward Society is in part responsible — is briefly as follows: 'Anyone who imports, prints, publishes, sells or distributes a book, pamphlet, ballad, printed paper or other thing containing obscene, indecent or impure language manifestly tending to corrupt the morals of youth, or an obscene, indecent or impure print, picture, figure, image or description manifestly tending to corrupt the morals of youth,' etc., will be liable to criminal punishment.

Let us examine this wording closely, for it is certainly far from just. It must

be apparent to anyone that the phrase 'containing obscene, indecent or impure language' is an exceedingly strict qualification. Under these terms the Bible, the plays of Shakespeare, and all of the great novels could be suppressed; for, since a book to be suppressed need only contain 'obscene language,' — that is to say, an 'obscene or indecent' reference, paragraph, or page, — and since, to paraphrase English and American judicial opinions, that is obscene which tends to create obscene thoughts in the minds of those who are susceptible, it takes very little arguing to show that most contemporary novels, many contemporary biographies, and most of our great classics, when found in the hands of a moron, could be banned in Massachusetts on the strength — or weakness — of a single isolated passage. By their own statement the Watch and Ward Society take the whole book into consideration before making a complaint. Why should not the Massachusetts judge and jury be entitled to the same practice?

The actual procedure of complaint is something like this: Discovering in the hands of my little daughter a copy of Fielding's *Tom Jones*, I am made curious to see what it is that is amusing her. I read a few pages and am properly shocked. Hastily reaching for my hat, I march indignantly down to the bookseller who sold my child this trash and figuratively throw the book in his face. The bookseller defends himself by saying that he did not publish the book and has not read it. That does not give me the satisfaction I want, so I seek a policeman. With my pencil I mark the outrageous passages and ask him to read them. He is as shocked as I am and says he will take the matter up with his chief. He takes the book with him to headquarters and I go home to cool off.

Now the superintendent of police or the district attorney — should my marked copy of *Tom Jones* be relayed to him — has it in his power, if he believes the book is actionable, to descend without warning on my bookseller and arrest him for selling a book 'containing obscene, indecent or impure language.' The victim will be brought to trial and compelled to defend the book under the terms of the Massachusetts statute. The jury, naturally, will be picked from those who have never read *Tom Jones*. But the lawyer for the defense may not read the whole book to them or defend the whole book before them. His defense must be centred on those passages which were complained of and those alone. Such was the procedure in the recent trials of *Oil*, by Upton Sinclair, and Dreiser's *American Tragedy*. Both books were examined and finally condemned on the strength — or again the weakness — of certain isolated passages. That is why no other publishers have felt it worth while to attempt to defend their books under the present Massachusetts law.

My sympathies go to the bookseller. In the last twenty years there have been well over half a dozen court cases, and in every instance — with the exception of the *American Mercury* case — the verdict has gone against the bookseller. Yet he does not publish the books, and in buying, often from dummy copies, the ten or twelve thousand new titles that are shown to him by salesmen each year it must be apparent that he can have at the outset, and often for a long time thereafter, only the vaguest notion of the contents of the books on his counters. Realizing that the Watch and Ward Society will be on the lookout for what they consider obnoxious books, he anticipates their complaints by asking them to notify him in advance of their taking any action. Upon their notification he is left with the choice of withdrawing the suspected book from his circulation or of running

the risk of arrest and trial. He is human if he does the former and a martyr if he does not — and martyrs are rare in any community. Yet the former action on his part helps to establish the Watch and Ward Society as the virtual censors of our Commonwealth.

I do not wish to give the opinion that the Watch and Ward Society are the only crusaders involved. As I have said, they have been responsible for eleven suppressions in the past two years. The complaints which withdrew the other fifty-seven books from circulation were made by zealots, the police, and, in one case, the librarian of the Athenæum. Under the absurdly strict terms of the existing law no publisher other than Horace Liveright has felt justified in exposing his book and himself to a test case. A book could not be defended as a whole, and the fine and punishment — for this is a criminal law and gives one a criminal record — were hardly such as one would wish to incur even as a martyr. That is the reason why books like *The World of William Clissold*, by H. G. Wells, *The American Tragedy*, by Theodore Dreiser, *Dark Laughter*, by Sherwood Anderson, *Elmer Gantry*, by Sinclair Lewis, *As It Was*, by H. T., *The Sun Also Rises*, by Ernest Hemingway, and *The Wayward Man*, by St. John Irvine, — to mention a few which will not profit by any salacious publicity, — were suppressed in the city of Boston, and, if authorities wished, could have been suppressed anywhere within the Commonwealth, without trial. And that is why the publishers of *All Quiet on the Western Front* felt compelled to expurgate the English translation of their splendid novel. The book was printed in Massachusetts; its plates, should any unfavorable action have been taken, were open to confiscation. Printed copies might have been forbidden the mails.

All Quiet on the Western Front was published last June. Prior to publication, it had been adopted by one of the book clubs, at whose suggestion certain expurgations were made. In a few instances verbal refinements were substituted for the 'jargon of the latrine,' but the only notable mutilation was the cutting out of a three-page hospital episode. Those who have read the German or English version find this scene one of the most tender and appealing in the book, an opinion that was borne out in the recent Senatorial debate. Certainly the publishers have no hesitation in saying that their action has been more condemned than condoned, people being inclined to agree with Christopher Morley when he wrote, 'Here is a book that tells what modern war is really like, and the only things in it that we boggle at are the things that made even war seem momentarily human and tender.' Yet, in the face of the Massachusetts law, such prudery was considered expedient.

And what about the sixty-eight books which were actually suppressed? Why did they give cause for complaint, and whom did they offend? While it is not easy to inquire into the reasoning of those who take a morbid interest in other people's morals, we have here certain tangible evidence to guide us. 'It is desirable,' says E. M. Forster, the novelist, 'that people should not be corrupted, but there is no reason why they should not be shocked.' I submit that most of the suspected sixty-eight were banned because the ideas which they expressed on matters of sex and religion were shocking, not because the ideas or the language was such as to stimulate the reader's physical appetite. We know that a gentleman of high position objected to *Elmer Gantry* — presumably because it profaned his beliefs; we know that the Watch and Ward Society objected to eleven books, mostly novels — pre-

sumably because of an anti-Victorian approach to matters of sex; we know a single clerical zealot objected to some thirty books and would have gone on to more had he not been stopped by his bishop; we know that the district attorney's office objected to nearly a score of novels sent them in angry remonstrance by a bookseller. The bookseller had been notified that they were taking action against some half-dozen titles. 'Why, if you ban those,' he said, 'I can send you twenty more, no better and no worse.' He did, and they did. I submit that these judgments are as erratic as any which were lodged by the postal or customs authorities. I submit that they are not such as we should be likely to receive had the books been fairly tried before a Massachusetts jury and judge and under the terms of a just law.

V

We have seen how in England and in the United States our book censorship laws have been derived from statutes originally framed as a protection against deliberate pornography. We have seen how these laws were extended in scope until they were able to be applied against books innocent as well as guilty, classics as well as the *Memoirs of Fanny Hill*. We have seen what erratic judgments are to be expected in bureaucratic censorship, as under the crusading fervor of paternalistic societies. In view of such evidence it is easy to cry out against censorship generally. I believe, and indeed my whole paper is in support of the theory, that there must be a legal control of books, and I believe that the law courts are a logical place for their examination and that our judges, if not our juries, are qualified to decide upon the question of whether or not they are obscene. I believe very earnestly that the law should be so worded as to take the whole book into account. Such a law is enforced in New York; such a reform is urgently needed in Massachusetts if our reading is to be untroubled by self-appointed censors. The Watch and Ward Society have intimated that they judge a book in this way, and, furthermore, that they might endorse such a rewording of the present statute as would make this the legal practice as well.

If the statute is so worded as to ensure the judgment of the whole book rather than the judgment of an isolated passage, publishers will feel justified in defending, as they do in New York and elsewhere, books which have been the subject of complaint. If the complaint is borne out by the decision of the jury and judge, the publisher may be considered to have received fair warning against such continued practice, and if the book is given a clean bill of health no more will be thought about it. Surely such an arrangement is infinitely superior to the present situation in Boston when at the insistence of private, and at times irresponsible, citizens books are banned in the city, without trial, yet sold like notorious hot cakes throughout the rest of the state. The hypocrisy of the present situation, the injury which it does to literature, the notoriety which it too often bestows on cheap books which would never otherwise have been brought to readers' attention, the contempt for law which it encourages among Massachusetts citizens, and the light of absurdity in which we find ourselves before the rest of the world — these are the results of an obsolete statute and of a virtual but unofficial censorship in Massachusetts.

(*The* Atlantic *will be glad to continue the discussion with useful and interesting suggestions regarding this difficult question*)

12152

THRILLS

BY JAY ZARADO

I

Up at the top of the circus tent, on a flying trapeze, a small white and gold figure spun dizzily. Over and over the slender steel bar it turned, now hanging by its toes, now by its knees, now by its hands, now dizzily holding by its teeth. Now it swung head downward, clinging by the very tips of its toes. Far beneath it on the ground, a man held one end of a rope, the other end of which hung just beside the white and gold figure on the trapeze. He held it far away, so that it did not touch the swinging acrobat, whose outstretched hands reached toward the audience watching from the seats below.

The man with the rope stumbles; the rope, suddenly released, swishes toward the swinging figure, strikes it, dashes it from its slender grasp, and down through space hurtles a flash of white and gold, while up above the bar swings crazily. Now the rope in its erratic course swerves toward the falling figure; the outstretched hands reach toward it, grasp and hold it; the hurtling figure, falling head downward, stops with a jerk, the legs whip down, and, a scant yard from the ground, the white and gold figure swings clear, steps off, and takes a bow. The audience applauds the daring trick; the acrobat climbs up the length of rope to the crazily swinging trapeze above and finishes her act.

No one in the crowd knew that it was a fall, that only chance swung the rope toward the falling woman; but I knew it! I was the white and gold figure, and I had a pair of sore shoulders for a while to remind me of it.

My experience has included twenty-two years on the road, and fifteen seasons of aerial trapeze work with circuses, at parks and fairs, in vaudeville and indoor exhibitions of all kinds. Among the circuses in which I have appeared are those of Shipp and Feltus, an all-American circus traveling in South America; Ringling Brothers; Barnum and Bailey; Sells-Floto; Santos and Artigas, a Cuban circus. I have performed indoors for the Shriners, Elks, Moose, and the American Legion. My work has included trapeze, a rope called the Spanish Web, 'iron jaw' (hanging by my teeth), rings, singing and dancing. My rigging usually hung forty feet from the ground, and I have never had a safety net below me.

I liked circus life best of all. I liked the association in the dressing room, I liked the traveling in the circus cars. Out of doors all the time, in all kinds of weather and in all parts of the country! In the many years during which the circus has been an unfailing source of pleasure in the United States, its repertory and types of performance have varied little. It has undergone few changes. One of its fixed institutions used to be the parade, and every time I read how good for the health is an early-morning ride I think of the dressing room in the days before the parade was discontinued. We used to leave the sleeping cars somewhere in the train yards, find the lot, get some breakfast

if we were not too late, go to the dressing room and get ready to ride some kind of animal, or appear on a float or a cage.

The parade may have been beautiful to look at, but as memory presents the scene in the dressing room as the performers made ready it is associated mostly with hurry and confusion, no time for breakfast, boiling-hot days, or freezing cold. If it rained, you just got wet; if the lot was far from town, and if the parade was long, perhaps you missed your lunch as well as your breakfast. I can truthfully say that the admiration of the crowd who witness the parade has little or no effect on an empty stomach. When dinner time arrived at four-thirty, there was no lack of appetite. After the parade as an institution had gone once and for all, we found that it was sorely missed by a lot of people who did not have to ride in it. But we used to read about the strenuous protests of town councils and merchants' associations against parading, and traffic conditions finally made an end of it.

A check-up at the end of the first season without parades showed a general increase in the morale, health, and appearance of people and animals. Yet it used to be fun at the start of the season to watch the new members of the troupe trying to 'catch up with the parade.' If one of them moaned the lack of time, there was a chorus of reminders that people who *would* troupe with a circus must not expect their breakfast to be served in bed, that they ought to consider all the country they were seeing, that nothing was so healthy as an invigorating morning ride, and that it was something to wear a beautiful costume for the crowd to admire. Comforting, for a harried acrobat or horseback rider, trying to wash tights, clean shoes, fix riggings, mend clothes, bathe, or accomplish other odd tasks before the bugle blew to mount!

Parade had few compensations, but often it led to an unexpected thrill. Once I was riding on a cage filled with bears, along with half a dozen other girls, and it upset on a piece of sandy road at the far corner of the show lot. It turned over slowly, and we all followed the turn of the cage and did not get thrown off, but the bears did not like us scrambling over the bars. They were not friendly at all, and we had to do some quick moving to keep from being clawed. It was a noisy tangle: the driver was swearing, the bears were howling, we were yelling, and the elephants were coming right behind us; but nothing at all happened. And we did not go in the parade that day!

II

The press agents have a great deal of patter about the life of the circus people and the running of the show, but one thing which they never fail to say is true, as near true as human statement can be. They say that the circus is one big family. I can think of nothing that will describe it any better than just that. An immense family, who eat and sleep and dress and live together season after season in the close confines of the tents and railroad cars. Hundreds of people from all parts of the world, all nationalities, all beliefs, bound by one common bond — the show.

From the advertising placed by the cars ahead to the tearing down of the tents when the performance is over, the show is the thing. The departments of advertising, commissary, and admissions, the side show, the menagerie, the big top, the wardrobe, and the concessions, all exist only to promote the big show. Hostlers and grooms, property men, candy butchers, light and chandelier men, waiters and cooks for

the cookhouse, truck drivers, wagon makers, sailmakers for the canvas of the tents, blacksmiths, water-wagon men, seat men and canvas men, exist for the same purpose. The centre of activities is the back yard, the space surrounding the back door of the big top, where the show goes in and comes out. Nothing must be allowed to mar the show, nothing must interfere with it, nothing must stop it. It starts with its glittering tournament around the track in the big top. Tournament is as carefully drilled and presented as any act in the performance. Its members are acrobats, clowns, and riders; its places are assigned at the start of the season and are maintained throughout, unless accidents prevent.

About a half-hour before the show is to start, a bugle call is blown. Just before the performance begins, a second call is blown. The Equestrian Director blows the whistle that actually sends the show into the tent. When the show has been delayed in getting to town the three signals follow each other closely, and there is a mad scramble to get ready.

One such day a surgeon, the guest of one of the staff, was going to watch the show from a seat placed beside the band leader. He strolled out of the back door to watch the gathering when the first bugle blew, and stood beside the leader, who told some of us afterward about the conversation. The manager of the show came out of the back door with his watch in his hand, approached the leader, and said: —

'Do you think they are ready in the dressing room? It looks like rain, and we are late now in starting.'

'Oh, I think so,' answered the leader; 'they have had fifteen minutes, and they all know we are late. Shall we have the second?'

'Yes, let's get it on its way.'

The bugle blew the call and followed it by two short quick notes, which mean, 'Hurry up.' And this is what the surgeon later told the leader: —

'What you folks call the back yard was to my notion very small and crowded. When the bugle blew, into that space poured, — yes, poured, — from all the dressing-room tents and some of the wagons, men and women and animals, a wild hurrying mass, brilliantly clothed. Almost instantly the whistle blew, the band formed and entered the big tent, and after it came the rest of the procession. Men and women ran to their places under the very noses of camels and plunging horses and huge elephants, trumpeting their nervousness. An original beauty climbed into a palanquin swung between two jerking camels and called out, "Somebody hold these two ships of the desert so I can assume my languid air."

'The king — I knew it was the king, because he carried his crown in his hand — dashed wildly out of the dressing room and mounted his prancing steed, adjusting his false moustache with one hand and his crown with the other, aided by two grooms. He caught up with his queen and entered the tent with a truly royal air. Men in armor ran with spears and shields, women dressed as butterflies and flowers piloted huge costumes with enormous wings and petals — at risk of their necks, it seemed to me. Floats detached themselves from the maze, their human burdens climbing on all over them; elephants knelt to allow their riders to get up on their backs. Expecting to see some of the men and women get trampled to death right before my eyes, I hurried into the tent to see what it looked like in there. Around the track the procession went slowly and unhurried, sparkling and glowing and in the most perfect order. I stared at it in amazement. At my hospital I

thought I had a system, but here before me was a miracle.'

Most of the circus reaches town early. Often we used to plan an entertainment of some kind for the time between shows — a dance on the stages in the big top, or a swimming party in a town where there was a large pool. In 1925 the combined circus of the Ringling Brothers and Barnum and Bailey contained two teams of lady baseball players; May Wirth, the bareback rider, was captain of one, and I was captain of the other. We had a game one day to decide which was the better team; we played between shows in a lot beside the dressing room. All through the matinée the teams and their sympathizers wore their respective colors, which waved gayly from the horses in the rings, from riggings, and from costumes. Most of the show managed to be present at the game, and quite a few townspeople. An enterprising reporter on a local paper wrote that he was astonished to learn that all the members of the two teams were performers; he thought that they sank exhausted after their acts and were glad to rest. It was a good game, and about as technical as a game played by ladies should be. We chose as umpire a member of the show who was hard of hearing. All the performers were good hitters; the ball sailed far, and often and many were the arguments. It was not so hard to get them to hit and run, but the rules suffered a lot. I had as third baseman a bareback rider, her body strong as iron. A runner could reach third only after a hard struggle; and she deserved the base when she got there, for my baseman, in spite of all warning, used all her strength and resourcefulness to keep runners off her base. She ran toward second and dared them to come her way. She was used to swarming all over a horse, and she covered the base effectively. She even heaved runners away bodily, and if she tagged them they knew that they had been tagged. My pitcher was a contortionist. She had long arms, and her delivery was weird. She scared the batter half to death. The ball would come shooting at her from the strangest angles of the pitcher's body.

I always admired the wild-animal trainers. There was Mabel Stark, fair and tiny, a little feather of a woman. I think that fear and Mabel had never met; yet no performance of hers was without a thrill or two. Something always happened, which she took as a matter of course. All of her tigers were twice as large as she. 'Cats,' she called them. She dressed near me in the tent, and one day she came in from her act, put her great whip in the handle of her trunk, hung her uniform coat on its hanger, and started to go out. I asked her where she was going, and she said to the doctor's tent, that one of her cats had bitten her. He had, twice, through the leg, and she spent most of the next two or three weeks in bed. As soon as she could hobble, she was on the lot looking out for her cats. She said the cat that bit her had fallen off his seat on the side of the arena and at the same moment she had stepped backward and stumbled against him, and that he was a nice well-behaved tiger and would probably never do it again. She ought to know — she knows her tigers.

And there is Olga Celeste, whom you see so much in pictures. She had a leopard act in the show in which I appeared, and dressed at the end of the aisle. Her leopards were temperamental; two of them seemed to dislike each other, and periodically they would start a row. And right into that mass of snarling, spitting, sure death she would go. A cut with a whip here and a sharp command there, and the row was over. I said to her: —

'But, Olga, suppose they should turn

on you! Not for anything would I ever try to settle an argument like that! No one would ever catch me refereeing a fight, right among the fighters.'

She laughed.

'Yes, and no one will ever catch me balanced in the air on a little tiny trapeze bar.'

III

I think the saddest-looking thing in all the world is the circus lot on a rainy day. Everything droops, even the spirits of the dressing room, and the band in the big top has a hollow, unearthly sound. But of course it has to rain. I have waded over and across and through so many muddy lots that I think I could identify a clod of mud from almost any section of the United States. Down South it is stickier. In some places it is black and in some brown; and some of it is a deep red; but it always is just mud. In the big top it is nicely covered with sawdust, but we have no trouble in finding it.

On a muddy lot one day, I finished my act and came down my rope looking for a nice spot in which to land. I chose a spot that looked innocent of guile, and was deceived — I went in up to my thighs, and it took two property men to fish me out.

A muddy lot, especially on a rainy day, works the greatest hardships on the stock and workingmen. They are right in the thick of it, for the heavy wagons must be brought to the lot and placed. I have never seen kinder drivers than those who travel with the circus. They love their teams; they care for them as though they were children. I have seen them with tears streaming down their faces, calling out to their horses when they were half buried in the mud themselves. On a dull, cloudy day, a bridge that we were crossing caved in beneath the weight of the cookhouse steam wagon. Four of the six horses had successfully crossed. On the seat of the wagon as it went down, the driver loosened the reins and called to his team, and steady and sure they pulled. They dug their hoofs into the pavement and, fighting for a foothold, strained with all their strength. The driver, cut about the head, was fast losing consciousness, but still he called to them, and as long as they heard his voice they pulled. Help was soon there, and men cut the traces and released the team. The driver sobbed like a child for one horse that had broken a leg so badly that it had to be shot.

Rain, wind, and mud make it difficult to work in the air on a rigging that jumps and rattles with the poles of the big top. Wind is the greatest danger of all.

I remember particularly a storm in a town in the Middle West. A cyclone appeared shortly after the matinée began. The big top was crowded; a lot of people were sitting on the ground on straw, in front of the seats. It was hot and uncomfortable. As the wind rose and the tent flapped, some of the crowd near the top ranks of seats began to get nervous, but the show went on just the same. As it grew dark the lights were lit and inside the big top you could not tell much about the storm. Ushers watched the spectators who grew nervous, and soon the crowd settled down. Acts came and went, and to all appearances the show was going on in a calm, unhurried manner. I guess that most performers are nervous themselves at a time like this, but they do not show it. A part of their task is to reveal only a smiling face to the crowd.

But outside the tent no such calm prevailed. All the workingmen on the lot were there, working in gangs of five or six, driving stakes as fast as they pulled, tying down flapping canvas, fixing broken ropes, changing broken poles. Down went our cookhouse (we

had a cold meal), and the side show followed it. The dressing room, in the shelter of the side show, soon had a sad air; its poles were at all angles, and its canvas looked like a bad job of draping. The rain came down in torrents, but by the time the matinée was over it had dwindled to a drizzle, and the crowd poured out of the show and viewed with the greatest astonishment the tents that had been blown down, and the uprooted trees on the lot. And about nine miles away a small village had to be rebuilt. Luckily, we did not get the full force of the blow.

Often during a storm the water floods the tent and you dress on the top of your trunk while the whole thing rocks and the canvas flaps and the side poles dance and wiggle around. And often the tent blows down and is scattered all around the surrounding country. In Cleveland, a storm came suddenly off the lake and the wind blew so hard that the show had to be shortened. I fought the wind to get to the big top, just as word was being sent back that the show would end with what was in the ring. By the time I got back to the dressing room, about three minutes later, one end of it was down and the other looked as if it would soon be on its way. We put our street clothes on over our costumes and dressed in the railway station, which is close to the lot there. In Canada, a sudden wind rose just before the night show started, and in a wink the dressing room was half a block away on top of the station. We closed down our trunks and made a bee line for the cars, for all the rest of the tents were sailing merrily away. The big top was nearly torn to shreds.

IV

People have sometimes asked me how it feels to fall from a great height. Such an experience is commonly supposed to be thrilling. It is, when it is all over, and if the performer who falls is still able to feel a thrill. My past life never floated through my mind during the falls I have myself undergone; I was too much occupied with the immediate present.

I know that all successful aerialists have a sort of sixth sense that makes it possible for them to keep a clear head and perfect presence of mind while performing high in the air. I know that I am not dizzy on my rigging, or at any height, and that I never was. An aerialist from long and arduous practice acquires a keen sense of balance — so very keen that any slackening of the rigging is felt at once. From the same practice comes the ability to decide instantly what is to be done in such a case, and also the instant response of a finely trained body. An aerialist with a head full of fear and a wavering judgment will not stay in the air very long. The perilous moment that demands quick thought usually finds the true performer with a mind in good working order. An emergency comes, a decision is made and acted upon.

Sometimes, when the accident is averted, the audience sees what appears to be a fumbled trick, and again, when Lady Luck has a day off, it sees a fall. Occasionally the rigging breaks, and that will come under the heading 'just too bad.' But the percentage of fatal and serious accidents in circus life is very small, and the number of lucky escapes is legion. For my own part, I did my work because I liked it. The thrill of a fall or two affected me little, except to make me more careful.

In a New York paper was an account of a young woman who desired to commit suicide. She chose to jump off a sixteen-story building, and she was soon on her way to the sidewalk. The

paper said that in some way while she was falling she learned how to fall, as the circus performer learns. An automobile was parked near the curbing and she went right through the top of it and escaped with a broken shoulder and a dislike for high dives. We circus people read the account, and after a careful check-up in the dressing room we could not find a performer who knew how to fall. We agreed that you just fall and that you usually land on what happens to be under you.

Once I was gayly balanced on my trapeze when a steel ring at the top of the centre pole broke with a loud snap. The break, occurring on one side, turned the rigging and threw me sideways and right toward the centre pole. I did not think of anything at all — simply opened my arms imploringly and met the pole, and slid down its length to the ground, acquiring slivers and blue paint all the rugged way, and leaving little pieces of my skin and tights and the whole front of my white satin costume. Down on the ground, I gathered the remnants of my tights and costume around me, took one look at the tangled mass of my rigging on the ground, and crept out of the back door to the dressing room. Later, the band leader told me that the next time I put a long slide for life in my act I ought to let him know in advance, and he would have the drummer coöperate with a stirring roll on his snare drum. The doctor picked splinters out of me for an hour or so, and every once in a while during the rest of the season I would find one or two he had overlooked. I must have been too eager to get started on my slide, for I had a bump on my forehead, black and blue and very prominent.

Many people believe that after a hard fall it is a dreadful struggle to climb back on the rigging. I know that where the fall has been due to a trick that has miscarried the performer practises it as soon as he can, to find out how the mistake happened. And after a fall the acrobat goes back to work as soon as he is able, because muscles soften quickly without regular practice. If the performer is fearful of the trick, then he works to regain confidence.

I think that Hilary Long, the head balancer, gets about as many falls as anyone in the business. He slides down a wire while balanced on his head. To carry his weight, and give the needed resistance, the wire is guyed down very tightly. He has to watch every part of his whole rigging constantly, for overstrain. And he has to examine the slope of the ground, so as to determine how gravitation will act, and its texture, to see whether it will hold the stakes. He is a calm little chap, hard to ruffle. He climbs his rope ladder up to his pedestal and looks down the slide wire while the announcer is telling the audience that he is about to slide down that slender wire, balanced on his head. He takes his position on his head, and away he goes. Part way down, perhaps, he loses his balance, and cannot recover it. He catches the wire with his hands, turns over, slides to the ground hanging by his arms, goes patiently up the rope ladder again and gets ready to do it all over. Down again he comes, after an assistant has adjusted some part of the apparatus. If he makes it this time, he steps off on the ground beneath his wire, takes a bow, and departs. He hears the applause, but his mind is busy with the reasons why he did not succeed the first time. He does not give a single sign that only the quickness of his eye, his hands, his body, has kept him from a broken neck. If you should ask him about it, he would probably tell you, as he told me, that of course he grabs the wire if he can — that nobody wants a broken neck.

V

The big show dressing room accommodates most of the performers, clowns, and animal trainers. It is divided into two parts, for the men and the women, and in the centre are ranged the wardrobe tables and trunks containing the tournament clothes. Outside, in private tents, and sometimes in the wagons, are the dressing rooms of the stars and feature performers. Inside the big dressing room the trunks are arranged in rows with an aisle between. They are all numbered and are in the same place every day. Each member of the circus is allowed a small folding chair, and each has his own buckets for washing and bathing. Outside, on the guy lines of the tent, clotheslines may be strung. Nearly all the larger towns have one-day service for laundry and cleaning, and that is arranged by the porters in the sleeping cars.

The dressing room is looked upon by the circus people as home. It is the only home they have, the long season through, and they act there just as you do in your own home. It has no rules, for it needs none; it is respected and guarded and cared for, much as you respect and guard and care for your own home. As the people who take part in the show are gathered from all parts of the world, the dressing room is a lively place, full of all manner of personalities. Dangers, good times, pleasures, floods, escapades, birthdays, weddings, quarrels, are intimately shared, and everyone risks his neck with his neighbor. There are clubs of all kinds, most of them favoring sports, but chess and card clubs also have their place. Most of the women do lovely embroidery and make their own costumes.

Often the gay orderliness of the dressing room gives place to a hush and a hurrying. As the show goes on, you keep in mind the piece the band is playing and that tells you what troupe is working in the big top. When there has been an accident it is almost always the sudden change in the music that tells of it. For a new number is begun as soon as possible and the next act goes in to take the memory of the disaster from the audience. The man who blows the whistle to start and stop the acts is just inside the back door, watching closely. If an accident occurs, he blows his whistle, and the band concludes its piece. The next act is ready, of course, but the one next to that must hurry up.

One day when the high perches were working the band suddenly went into the fast music of their finish. The number that followed was a riding number, and of course it was ready. I was in the next number to that one, and I hurried to finish dressing. We knew that something had happened; the wife of one of the perch performers went out to the big top. The dressing room became quiet; one or two women came and helped me dress. We learned from a property boy that a perch had broken and that two men were hurt. In the big top, while I was walking down the track toward my rigging, I remembered that that particular act worked in the same ring in which I was now to perform; and when I stepped into the loop of my line, to be pulled up to my rigging, I saw the broken pole lying on the ground, just outside the ring. It is not an easy thing to work at such a time. You have in mind, of course, the injured performers; and then the audience is not in a good mood. They will not enjoy your offering, and the more thrills you provide, the more coldly they will receive them.

This audience was not only still, it was tense, and later, in the dressing room I learned why. The man on the perch was hanging by one foot from a loop at the top of the pole when it

broke. He dropped at once. The man below, the pole on his shoulders, turned so that the part of the pole he was still holding would not fall into the audience, and threw it away from him and got beneath the falling man. There was not time to brace himself for the shock of the contact; he caught his partner on his shoulders and both of them went to the ground in a heap. All in the flash of a moment, the man below had done the only thing he could do, bravely and without hesitation. The crowd knew that he had taken a hero's part and that perhaps he had given his life to save another. They were both back in the ring inside of three weeks. The one below had a strained back and the one on top had a broken shoulder blade.

VI

The train, as well as the big top, provides its moments of excitement. On a long Sunday run in the Cascades, a drawhead pulled on one of the elephant cars, and as there was no sidetrack long enough to allow the train crew to put the car anywhere else, it was shunted out ahead of the engine. The car was full of small elephants, and when a few moments later we stopped on a curve we saw their little trunks waving out of the doors to right and to left. The sides of the car were going in and out as if they were being agitated by a monstrous kind of breathing, and the elephants were telling the world that they did not enjoy being pushed along ahead of the engine. As soon as trackage allowed they were put on the end of the train, for a herd of baby elephants all possessed by one idea is quite enough to wreck a train.

Somewhere in the Northwest, where we stopped on a long run to feed and water, our section of the train pulled into the town just as the crew were switching the cars of the first section, soon to be on its way. They were for the most part flat cars, loaded with cages containing the animals of the menagerie, two cages to a flat. The yards were full of people who had gathered from all the surrounding country to see what they could see. Some few of us left our coaches and started to walk down the tracks toward the town just as the train crew were bringing two lines of flat cars toward each other. To the right of us was a cross track with a line of slowly moving cars, each with its load of cages, and coming toward it from the other way was another string about as long. There was a sudden shout, and we looked just in time to see one of the cars from the second string break away from the others and head for the centre of the first string. Right before our startled gaze, the runaway car hit one of the others square in the centre, and the cages rose in the air. I expect that everyone there knew as well as we knew that there were wild animals in the cages; there was a wild yell, and a rush, and the yards were cleared. Someone grabbed me by the arm and shouted: —

'Come on away from here! When those cages come down it will be raining wild animals all over the place!'

I had no intention of seeing what would happen; I just vanished. I was back in my berth when the loud crash announced that everything was on the ground. A kangaroo was killed, and a large bird of some kind. Luck was certainly in attendance. Tigers or lions might have been harder to kill.

Toward the end of the season, when the nights are cold and you wonder what you have done with your season's salary, many discussions occur in the dressing room as each performer tries to decide whether to play in vaudeville or to take a long rest. There is much thinking back over the season's trek, and bets on the closing date are offered.

When the circus is over, the people before whom we have played are conscious of the tug and the pull of it, even as we are, as they frantically pick the children off the back fence, or the roof of the garage, where they are imitating the acrobats. There is a lure, and a memory, that will bring them to see the show when next it comes to town, just as we know that when the whistle blows to start the next season we shall be there.

It is the last night, and the last act has played and bowed and left the sawdust ring. The band pauses, then swings into 'Auld Lang Syne'; all work on the lot stops until it is played, and then as the last note dies away there is a cheer, rising from the hundreds of throats. Something has gone. The characters are changed into men and women; the circus has folded its tents and vanished, silently, magically, somewhere into the night.

THE GAMBOLIER

BY MERLE COLBY

I

He stepped off the train, weighing his bags at the end of long arms. His eyes rested on the driver of a rusty flivver. He swung the bags into the taxi. His voice came harshly.

'Where's a good hotel, bub?'

The boy frowned down bare legs locked over the wheel and blew a bubble between his front teeth. 'There ain't but one.' The bubble disappeared and a grin took its place. 'The Non-Pareil. Hop in.'

The stranger climbed in after the bags, and the flivver lurched down the dirt street in the direction of the Square. The boy kept one leg cocked over the wheel, which he aided with his elbow at difficult moments. The bare foot of the other leg fiddled tentatively with the clutch, and another bubble — a larger one this time — began to grow between the lad's teeth, dancing with the movement of the car.

The passenger sat stiffly erect against the shiny upholstery. His grave face was a dull red color, crossed by deep wrinkles. A jutting nose divided eyes bulging palely from their sockets. His hair showed sparse and gray beneath his soiled panama.

'Huh?' remarked the driver above the chattering of the machine.

The man leaned forward in his seat.

'What's doing in town? I said, what's doing in town for a stranger?'

The boy grinned. 'Tighter'n a drum,' he shouted above the din. He eased a front wheel out of a rut with a knee. 'What would it be, now? Likker?' He roared the last word lustily, and half turned to look at his fare.

'No.'

The driver grunted and waved to an acquaintance passing on the sidewalk. 'There's a place other side of the railroad track. You give two raps on the door, like, and —'

'No.'

The boy twisted his neck and regarded his passenger for a moment,

then turned his eyes again on the road. With a jerk the car stopped its motion and his toe twiddled off the switch.

'Here you be. The Non-Pareil.'

The man got stiffly out. The boy watched him lift his heavy bags.

'Flat rate,' he said. 'Anyw'ere'n town, fifty cents.' He caught the silver deftly and watched his fare making his way up the high wooden steps. He blew a thoughtful bubble as the motor came to life.

The dank, memorial air within gave no relief from the oppressive early summer's heat outside. Behind a mahogany-stained pine desk stood a clerk in shirt sleeves, nibbling at a callus on his palm. As the red-faced man approached and set down his bags, the clerk cast a quizzical glance over his knuckles, expertly swinging round the register. With the easy air of a race which does most of its reading upside down he watched the stranger write his name.

'Clarence Stimson,' he read. 'Newark, N. J. . . . Business?'

The guest of the Non-Pareil kicked one of his bags.

'Slum. Slum jewelry for the hired girls and their beaus. Want to see some?'

The clerk looked annoyed. 'Not me. Doing well?'

Stimson did not answer the question. Instead, he leaned closer over the desk, summoning to his wrinkled face a jovial air.

'I'm a stranger in town. What's doing?'

A gleam of interest appeared in the eye of the clerk, and he bent nearer with an air at once confidential and worldly.

'Not much. Been a clean-up last week in this town. Things are kind of tight. In a week, yes. But just now . . . Was you wanting a drink?'

Stimson shook his head.

'We can't sell it, of course, but I can maybe lay hands on somebody that will. Good stuff, and cheap, considering.'

Stimson shook his head again, taking off his panama to wipe his forehead with a muddy silk handkerchief.

'No,' he said.

The clerk stared, then chuckled knowingly. 'Oh. Well, it might be arranged. Let me see.' He tapped his teeth with a penholder. 'To-night's choir practice. But you just have your supper, and go up to your room, and about eight o'clock . . .'

Stimson wiped the sweatband of his hat with his handkerchief. 'No, nor girls neither.'

The clerk tapped the penholder in a slower rhythm, and finally laid it down. 'Guess I can't help you, mister.'

The man before the desk hesitated, and a queer shy look came into his face. His pale eyes gleamed, but his mouth held a straight line.

'Listen,' he said. 'Listen.' He gripped the edge of the desk. 'Liquor ain't my line, and I can't get up no interest in girls.'

The clerk stared. After a long pause, he straightened his back and raised his voice to a normal tone.

'Can't do anything for you, mister,' he said. A face or two looked up from the lobby chairs. 'Town's closed up tight. There's been a clean-up in town. Whatever you want, it ain't to be had.'

The stranger half-dropped the lids over his bulging eyes. His mouth twisted cunningly. 'You say so.' He stood proudly before the desk. 'Liquor don't interest me,' he repeated, 'nor women neither.' Then his eyes searched the faces of the loungers. They stared at him coldly, without expression.

'Mister,' put in the clerk, 'you better do like I said first. Monk, you take this gentleman's cases.' Without a

word, the guest of the Non-Pareil followed the boy upstairs.

II

Stimson did not linger after supper in the stuffy little dining room. As soon as might be he left the cups and saucers and sauntered outside, perhaps to get a breath of air.

The street lamps shuddered one by one ablaze, lighting up the under branches of the dusty maples. Beneath each one a pool of light lay evenly in the dust, held darkly as if in a cup. In these pools boys crawled upon their knees, searching for June beetles, loosing pent screams when bit by their sharp nippers. A street lamp blinked evilly and hummed a small tune. Stimson left the Square, turning off into a wide, deserted street.

The air pressed close upon the tired grass. Overhead, without warning, a locust suddenly began its buzzing lament. Stimson heard other voices take up the wailing rattle as the locust strained its stretched string tighter, tighter, with a sound like that forced by a boy from a button on a cord. At last all the voices, tautened to full stretch, cracked together on their highest note, slid half an octave, ran down, and were still. The man felt the sweat running between his shoulder blades. He fanned himself with his panama hat, warm streams coursing down his flank from under his lifted arm. The air pressed closer.

Down another street, less wide, he went, and up another. A hooded light blinked on behind a pane level with the walk. Stimson stopped and looked in.

In and out of the glare of a shaded bulb hands came and went. They paused for a moment in its circle, hesitated, moved with downward palms, disappeared. Suddenly a large hairy hand strode into the illumined circle like a furred creature; hesitated; made a gesture. Its mate followed, pushing into the circle a tall column, gleaming dully between its fingers. Directly opposite a long thin hand dipped into the light, flinging down five white squares. Stimson leaned closer. Under the lamp shade lay a pile of chips and a row of cards.

Stimson caught his breath between his teeth. Beside the window he saw a basement door. He walked down four concrete steps, lifted the iron latch, and pushed in.

The lamp went out. There was utter silence. It clicked on again, and tilted up sharply at Stimson. A voice growled.

'What's your business here?'

Stimson looked straight into the glowing light bulb. 'Boys,' he began.

'Name your business!'

'I — I saw a little game going on. Through the window. I — maybe you might be letting me set in.'

The swinging lamp fell back into its normal position, swaying gravely once, twice. A little circle of light swept over the small table. Someone in the gloom swore softly.

A bulky shadow detached itself from the other shadows and stood in the light. It became a short, long-armed man, his face and hands covered with red fur. He chewed meditatively a moment, then spoke.

'Git!'

Stimson hesitated. The short man lazily reached out a hand and caught the intruder's elbow in one great palm. The nerves in Stimson's arm buzzed, and his wrist and fingers went dead.

'We ain't partial to setters-in. Git!'

Stimson stood outside, rubbing his elbow. For a minute he watched the basement window. Finally he returned down the narrow street, up the wider one, and so back into the Square.

Once around the four sides of the

Square he paced, past the memorial statue, past the cast-iron drinking fountain. The restaurant keeper, closing his shop, nodded briefly as Stimson went by. Crossing the stale outlet of an alley, Stimson saw a glow of light from a bakeshop behind. The large gray courthouse in the middle of the Square turned slowly one imperturbable side after the other to him as he gradually caught up to his own footsteps, again passing the cast-iron fountain. This time there was a dog lapping busily at its base. The dog looked up at the man, slapped a whiplike tongue against his muzzle, panted a moment, and recommenced drinking.

III

As for the third time he made his way around the Square, pausing occasionally to mop his forehead or to fan the sweat out of his eyebrows with his hat, Stimson's feet and brain lagged. His soaked shirt clung like a second and more tightly fitting skin, and his forehead prickled where the hatband had rested. The nostrils of his jutting nose opened and shut like valves, and his head turned slowly, searchingly, as he walked.

At last, almost without surprise, he noted at a window in the third story of a building, over a store, a thin split of light. He stopped to look more carefully. The window blind drew up to the top of the window instead of to the bottom as a normal window blind should. At its very top a narrow crack revealed a yellow edge of light.

Stimson turned into a hallway. A steep wooden stair led upward. As he started to climb, he felt his toes stub against tin signs nailed against the riser of every step. At the landing, halfway up the first flight, a yellow bulb burned under a coating of dirt.

There was no light on the landing at the head of the first flight. Stimson climbed eagerly, his shadow stretching like rubber before him at every step. He paused to listen. From above came a faint, indefinable noise.

Stimson climbed halfway up the second flight and listened again. The slight noise became clearer. 'Chink-chink!' it said. Chink-chink! Chink-chink-chink! Stimson hurried up the remainder of the flight, and stumbled on the top step. He cursed under his breath as the tiny noise stopped.

On the top step he stood and waited. Outside he could hear, no less plainly, the wail of the locusts in the dusty trees. The air from the street made its way slowly up the stairs after him, pausing at each step like an asthmatic charwoman. When it reached him there was no elasticity in its breath. Stimson stood and waited, as if by stilling the beating of his heart he could force the little sound to take courage and creep out into the hallway again.

Chink! It began hesitantly. Chink-chink! Stimson gasped, as if the climb up the stairs had suddenly caught him under the ribs. The noise steadied, stopped a moment, then went on as merrily as before. Chink-chink-chink-ity-ity-ity-chink! Chink!

The man reached out and touched with either hand the walls of the hall, swiftly making his way between them to a door. Under its lower crack lay a rule of light. He knocked on the door.

Soundlessly the light under the door went out. There was a long silence. Stimson knocked again, and as if at a signal the light poured on. The door opened suddenly. Stimson faced the company in the room.

On a table covered with green felt lay piled stacks of silver dollars, ranged in neat towers before each of the five men sitting before it. In the table's centre more dollars were flung in a great shining heap, melded together

under the hard light. As Stimson stood undecided, the man at the head of the table turned to his neighbor.

'New to me,' he said.

The one spoken to turned to his next. 'A stranger to town,' he remarked gravely.

The third man turned and studied Stimson. 'What does he want?' he asked impersonally of the two next him, two men dressed alike in corduroy trousers, shirt sleeves, and galluses, wearing scanty sandy beards. The two turned and gazed at each other, a vague interest at the back of their eyes, then turned their heads as on one swivel back to the man at the head of the table.

'Might ask,' one of the twins suggested mildly.

The company turned unanimously to a thickset, short-necked man astraddle a chair in a dark corner, a little removed from the table. There was a metal shield fastened to his shirt, and the bone handle of a revolver peered from his hip pocket. He surveyed Stimson slowly.

'Shut the door!' he commanded.

Stimson shut the door. The players returned to their game, and the silver dollars chinked steadily once more. The thickset man curled a toe around each of the legs of his chair, hitched it around to face the newcomer, chewed thoughtfully a moment, and spoke.

'Name?'

'Stimson's the name. What's yours?'

The other moved his jaws vaguely, as if striving to remember. 'Business?'

'Cheap jewelry. Can I sell you some?'

The man reddened, stopped chewing, then suddenly smiled. 'Guess you don't know who I am.' Stimson said nothing; only looked at him. 'I'm the marshal.' He teetered the chair under him cheerfully, pushing the butt of his revolver farther into his pocket, his eyes always on the intruder.

One of the two men in corduroys got up awkwardly from the table. 'Stimson's the name,' he said, addressing the company. A slow grin came over his face. He turned to the intruder with a mock-formal air.

'This here,' he said portentously, making a gesture toward Stimson, 'is Mel Thacher.' The man at the head of the table scowled, wiping his hand on his trousers. 'Mel, meet Mr. Stimson. He handles jewelry.'

The man in corduroys grinned wider. He seemed to take no notice of the fact that Mel did not offer to shake hands.

'And the feller next Mel, he's John Hanspur. He does trucking in this town. Vegetables, not trunks.' A swarthy figure next Mel growled and looked at the floor. 'John, meet Mr. Stimson. He peddles jewelry — glass and brass.'

A bald-headed man let off a laugh like a train of squibs that fizzled and died into silence as it was echoed by nobody else. The man in corduroys turned in his direction.

'And that gent there, he's Marthy Slocum's husband. Slocum, meet Mr. Stimson.' He turned to Stimson in mock query. 'What did you say your line was, mister? I kind of fergit.' He pretended to listen to Stimson, whose red face grew redder as he stared straight before him at the table and its series of little silver towers. 'Oh, yes. He sells jewelry — the cheap kind.'

The tall man turned to his twin in corduroys. 'And that there is my uncle, only we're aged alike. People mostly takes us for brothers. His name is Langer, and mine is Slescher. Henry Slescher, Mr. Stimson. I'm real pleased to meet you.' He grinned widely, looking around for applause.

Stimson stood very straight, his thumbs rubbing lightly over the forefingers of his closed fists. The town marshal jerked up from his chair, shouldering Slescher carelessly out of the way.

'What're you looking for?' asked the marshal. There was no laughter in his voice. 'Whatever it is, you won't find it here.'

Stimson would not take his eyes from the table. 'No offense,' he said slowly. 'Slum's my line, and I'm not ashamed of it. I get my living honest.' He spoke more carefully, his gaze still on the little round towers rising sharply from the green plain of the table. 'I'd like to set in. If you gents don't mind, I'd like to gambolier a little.'

The marshal pondered, teetering thoughtfully from toe to heel. He looked over his shoulder at the rest. There was no expression on any of their faces. He turned back to Stimson.

'Set in,' he said. 'But I'll be setting in, too. Across the room.' He paused.

'Might's well set in,' he muttered, and turned away, the bone handle in his pocket working up and down as he walked.

Stimson studied the impassive faces before him. He made his way to the table. A place opened for him, and he sat down.

IV

From the head of the table Mel Thacher studied him. 'Buy in,' he suggested curtly.

Stimson produced a twenty-dollar bill. Mel took it, examined it carefully, his mouth screwed up, then reached in the sagging pocket of his coat. Surveying Stimson all the while, he pulled out his fist and flung its contents on the table before the stranger. Stimson counted the pile. There were exactly twenty silver dollars in the handful. Stimson began carefully to lay the coins one atop the other.

'Cut!' commanded the man next him, reluctantly laying down a deck of cards. Stimson separated it into two unequal halves, and the dealer picked up the packets warily. On the table before Stimson one card after another drifted down.

Somebody at the table fingered his stack of silver. The sound rang gently in the closed room, seemingly more subdued than its gentle chink-chink had sounded from without. Stimson found himself aware of little noises filtering in gently and persistently from the street. A boy's shout sang faintly, like the rim of a glass touched with a wet finger. A wagon rattled by, the pad of the horses' hoof-falls quieted in the thick dust. A cat cried spitefully with a human wail. Over and above all rang the interminable metallic voices of the locusts in the maple trees. Stimson glanced toward the shaded window, his ears vaguely alert to their cry.

His eyes came back to the players. They leaned forward eagerly, their faces vacant with studied blankness, their shoulders and hands eloquent. His neighbor had passed; the rest stayed in. Stimson stood pat, and after a brief tussle swept in a small pot. The game began now in earnest; the rest were taking his measure. Stimson played carefully, betting on his hands for no more than they were worth until he should have tested his opponents' mettle. He waited patiently for a good deal, then with a lucky draw, after a glance around the table, he began skillfully and judiciously to build up the pot. At this moment he was aware of Slocum's bald head opposite, tilted back, staring over his shoulder. The others had paused in their game, and were steadfastly regarding something behind Stimson.

The marshal spoke. 'Well, Harry?'

Slescher uncrossed his legs, the corduroy whisking in the sudden silence like an indrawn breath. Stimson felt a breath come heavily on his neck, and rose suddenly, hooking a toe under his chair as he did so. The chair toppled and fell backward with a splintering crash. Stimson turned his back to the table, and stood facing a bulky, squat, long-armed man, who had jumped aside out of the way of the chair. One of the man's hands was raised halfway toward his face. It was a rough hand, covered with fur like a strange insect. Stimson recognized its owner for the fellow who had ordered him so abruptly away from the other game in the little room on the back street.

'Well, Harry?'

The intruder ignored the marshal, but addressed Stimson. 'Seems to me you kind of like to bung in where you ain't wanted,' he said. 'We ain't partial to setters-in. Not in this town. Not in this time.'

Stimson said nothing, but half turned to his companions at the table. Nobody stirred.

'A feller was here last week,' went on the bulky man. 'A feller like yourself, mister. He was anxious for a game. So we let him set in.'

As if a portent lay beneath the words, somebody at the table drew a long breath.

'Maybe we found out something about that man,' went on the voice. 'Maybe somebody said something. Or maybe we just guessed. Anyway,' — a long pause, waited upon by stillness, — 'anyway, we rid him out of town. He ain't come back.'

Stimson stared around the table. Not a face held anything but a sullen emptiness. Slescher sat leaning forward, his chin in the heels of his palms, his fingers caught over his high cheek bones. The gesture pulled down the rims of his eyes, until their whites stared blankly out of two red wounds.

The bulky man caught Stimson by an elbow, and again the gambolier felt a pain shoot up into his shoulder socket. 'Nothing you can say won't do you no good. But say it, if you've a mind to.'

Stimson tried to speak. He shook his head helplessly.

His captor turned to the men at the table. As one they rose, their chairs scraping on the floor. With Stimson's elbow still caught in his fingers, the long-armed man made for the door. The rest followed.

From his corner the town marshal, astraddle his chair, cleared his throat apologetically. 'I kind of guess,' he suggested mildly, 'you forgot who I am, Harry.'

The long-armed man stopped in his tracks. The marshal came forward in leisurely fashion, the butt of his revolver sliding up and down like an Adam's apple. He ambled to the table before the piles of silver at Stimson's place. Sweeping them into his hand, he jangled them a moment reflectively, then tossed them into the coat pocket of the gambolier. He turned to the rest.

'Boys,' he remarked, 'I ain't got no grocery store to lock up at six o'clock and go home from. I ain't got no truck garden that can't be weeded but by daylight. I'm town marshal, and that goes even when other folks is asleep. Or even when I be myself. So you see, boys, you kind of got to do like I say.'

He faced the captor of Stimson. 'Harry, you better go home. I'll take care of this.' Harry cast a surly look at the gambolier, dropped his elbow, and went out. His heavy step could be heard descending the stairs. Once he stumbled, and a curse floated up the stairway through the open door. The steps died away.

The town marshal looked around at the rest of the company. He turned his eyes mildly in the direction of the table. Sheepishly they returned to their places.

'Langer and Slescher, you come with me.' The men in corduroys hesitated, swept their dollars into their pockets, tossed their cards into the centre of the table, and followed the marshal and Stimson down the stairs.

V

The heavy night air fell over their shoulders in swathings as they emerged from the doorway at the bottom. The two men in corduroys plodded along silently behind the marshal and Stimson. No one said a word until they rounded the Square and brought up before the front entrance of the Non-Pareil.

'Git your bags,' suggested the marshal.

Stimson entered the hotel, secured his luggage, paid his reckoning to the astonished clerk. He came slowly down the steep steps.

The marshal spoke. 'Mister, you give your bags to the boys here. No call for you to carry them. We got a good piece to walk.'

The two men in corduroys came forward like shadows, one on each side. Each took a bag and fell back. The marshal dropped into step with Stimson.

'There's a train stops to take on water a little ways out of town. You can board her there.'

Stimson nodded.

'Don't ask me no questions, went on the marshal. His voice seemed somehow a little tired. 'Maybe I would n't know how to answer them if you was to ask. All I know is, some of the boys feels a little on edge. And this is one of the times where it's better to walk than be rid.'

They had reached the outskirts of the city, where one enormous maple guarded the street's end. Here they stopped for a moment. At this point everyone leaving that town or entering it paused, as if to remark afresh on the accident of a town with shaded streets set down in the midst of the rolling, almost treeless farm land. There seemed to be no moon, but somewhere light was, for the shadow of the great tree lay softly in the white dust.

One of the bearers of Stimson's baggage lit a cigarette. The tired voice of a cricket gave up its ghost in the long, dust-powdered grass. A locust's reel ran down before it had fully wound up. The footsteps of the little company came down in a succession of plodding puffs, the dust spurting out in tiny clouds under their heels. On each side of the road the cement fence posts whitely marched abreast, behind which lay, right and left, the fields of oats and wheat. The flame of the match, on the open prairie, burned upright and still.

They came to the railway where it intersected the road, the rails glinting sharply. Here the road bent to follow the rails, and the little group in turn followed the road. As they swung to the right, they bunched for a moment. So close were they that each was made aware of the body of his neighbor in the dark by its heat alone.

The oats to one side of the road gave way to corn. It had been shortly laid by, and was now as high as a tall man's hips. The wheat on the other side too made way for its silent march. On both sides of the walking men stood the growing corn.

The marshal stopped and pointed. Ahead and to the right a squat steel tank stood on spidery legs. Near it burned a signal. The two men in corduroys lowered the heavy cases into the dust.

But Stimson, instead of looking at the tank, gazed wonderingly right and left. The blades of the corn were in motion. They swayed gently against each other, rasping audibly.

'Look,' said Stimson. It was the first time he had spoken since the interruption of the game. 'There's a breeze come up!'

Slescher shifted a cud of tobacco and shook his head. His spittle flopped in the dust like a toad leaping. 'No wind, that ain't. It's just the corn. Growing.'

Langer corroborated his statement. 'Corn ain't never still,' he added. 'It grows so fast in weather like this, it can't keep quiet. An inch a night, sometimes. It rustles, sure. But not from wind.'

The corn was growing. The noise it made was the noise of its growth.

The marshal spoke in the darkness. 'I remember when I was a boy, we had just such nights as this. And I used to lay abed, near crying with the pain in my legs. The muscles in 'em hurt just like they was being stretched on a curtain stretcher.' He chuckled. 'And my folks used to ask me what made me thrash so. Was I hot? they said. And when I said I just about had to grit my teeth to keep from yelling at the stretch in my legs, they only laughed. Growing pains, they told me. Every boy has 'em, they told me. Just growing pains.' The marshal's voice slid a note deeper as he forgot his listeners. 'I recollect I was scared when I found out I had to hurt in order to grow. I felt plumb terrified to think I was alive.'

From the distance came the long screech of a train. Stimson turned. His bags lay in the dust. In a momentary panic he whirled about. The marshal stood, a comforting shadow, at his elbow.

'Plenty of time. She'll take several minutes to fill up her boiler.'

The gambolier stooped and picked up his bags. Without them he had walked a little bent, a little warily. At the familiar feel of their leather handles he straightened his back. He passed beyond the double aisles of growing corn, marching up to the water tank without a glance to either side. He flung his bags into the vestibule of the train, and climbed carefully after.

The marshal yawned as he watched the train gather speed.

'What did you make of him, boys?' he asked. 'Spotter, or just a sport?'

One of the men in corduroys dug at his ear with a finger. The other shook his head.

'We heard him say he was a gambolier.'

A BATMAN AT LARGE

BY ALEXANDER IRVINE

[Dr. Irvine, in his vivid paper, 'My Adult Education,' has told us how he landed in New York with a dollar in his pocket, a strong body, a willing mind, faith in God, and in himself. An incomplete list of his activities during the busy American years that preceded his war experience includes driving a milk cart, working in the Bowery Mission, attacking Tammany, and acquiring inside experience in the small-town problem in Iowa. He was a director of the religious work of the Y. M. C. A. in New Haven; organized a People's Church; was Chaplain of the Trolleymen's Union; tried to raise chickens — this seems to have been his one failure; joined the Socialist movement; worked in the Alabama iron mines, and in a turpentine camp. His outstanding achievement was the Sunday Forum of the Church of the Ascension in New York, where he was the right-hand man of Dr. Percy Stickney Grant, and a pioneer in the development of the Social Forum.

— The Editor]

I

Being a pacifist did not mean to me sitting apart and hooting like an owl in a tree. I was a human being, and nothing that was human was alien. The war came. We in the United States were not likely to be involved, yet over there were millions of men slaughtering each other in ignorance and hate. An inner voice called me to the conflict — not as a fighter, but as a friend.

After seriously thinking it over, I was convinced that my place was with my tribe. I went into the woods and dedicated myself to service, saying nothing to anybody about my plans. Only men of influence or money could get over there. I had neither. I had my belief in God. If I were needed, I should be called; and, if called, the means to get there would be forthcoming. It would be difficult to find or conceive of a man better fitted by experience to be helpful in such a cataclysm. I was as familiar with poverty, ignorance, hardship, and suffering as with my face in a glass.

Twenty months passed. About the first of May, 1916, I received a letter dated November 1, 1915. It was from a Quaker in York, England, a man I had never seen, never heard of. He had read my books, knew something of my history, and 'the voice within' had told him to call me. The letter had been going the rounds of my London and New York publishers and various residences for six months.

This, then, was the call. I cabled at once that I would proceed to England as soon as the school in which I was teaching broke up in June. I arrived in Liverpool on July 1, — the day of the catastrophe on the Somme, — and proceeded to London.

When I met the man who had called me, in York, and asked him what I was to do, he said he did n't know. His inner 'leading' had been summed up in the call. I was new on the ground and must find my work. Very quickly I found out — and very definitely —

what I was there for. In the two years of the war the United States had made billions out of the Allies. Wilson's 'too proud to fight' remark was sneered at. We were said to be 'capitalizing the blood and tears of Europe.' There was a distinctly hostile feeling everywhere. 'I have found my work,' I said to my friend the Quaker. 'I am the self-appointed representative of the American working class to the working class of the British Isles.'

'If thee will speak for thy Maker,' he replied, 'thee will represent all classes.'

I began with the big factories and shops, going there at the noon hour. I made no apologies and offered no criticisms. I represented myself as a disinterested American who had deprived himself of many ordinary comforts in order to get money enough to come over and help. When I told them the story of my life they knew that I belonged to them. My job was, first of all, to give hope and courage; then to inform them that we were not all moneygrubbers; and boldly I capped every climax with the suggestion, well driven in, that America could n't possibly keep out of the war.

My talks to the men were reported to the police and to the general commanding the district. Knowing this would be done, I spoke not merely to the men in front of me but to 'the powers that be' behind them.

My speeches were considered valuable for industrial morale. At the end of the first week I was invited to visit military camps, factories, and churches, under the auspices of the Y. M. C. A. I went to London to confer with 'Y' leaders. Fearing an orthodoxy with which I had no sympathy, I proposed to give six addresses around London to soldiers and in them to incorporate the substance of my message. This was agreed to, with the result that I was sent to the great camps of the British Isles.

America entered the war. I wrote a score of letters offering my services, but not a word came back in reply. I worked and waited.

A catastrophe on the western front brought me into active service with a suddenness that took my breath away. The long bread lines, sugar queues, meat tickets, hunger, and the Zeppelin raids were all making inroads into the morale of the civil population. The trouble seeped through in letters to the soldiers and affected the fighting men to such an extent that military leaders feared a debacle on the front line. A general was sent from Haig's headquarters to London with an S O S. Something had to be done, and done at once. The Cabinet met. Lord Rhondda was Food Commissioner, and Lloyd George put it up to him. He could n't sink the German U-boats. He could n't call down manna from Heaven. A wire summoned me to the Food Commissioner's office.

'A serious condition has arisen on the western fronts,' Lord Rhondda said to me. 'The morale is in danger of breaking, owing to our shortness of food at home. We have decided to send to France six of the best speakers in England, and you have been recommended to me to head the list. Will you go?'

'Certainly, sir!'

'The British Government will be under great obligations to you — I understand you are an American.'

I had an interview with a general from the staff of the Field Marshal, and when I came out into the murky streets of London the first thought that came to my mind was my dear old father's 'God's a gintleman!'

II

'Let them ask questions,' said Lord Rhondda to me as I left him. 'If you

can't answer them, I will. Just wire me.'

That sounded all right in Whitehall, but in Ypres, when I invited questions, the first one hurled at me was: —

'Is n't Lord Rhondda a b——y profiteer?'

I dodged that, but I could n't dodge them all, and few of them bore any relation to my lecture.

A few days before the great German offensive on the Somme, I was ordered to Ham. Half a million men were camped there. The nearest point to the German lines was Clastres, identified by a sign which read, 'This used to be Clastres.' The British soldiers had made a garden of the place. Flowers and vegetables were beginning to peep above the ground; vines had been trained, and rustic trelliswork, rocks, and scrap iron had been piled together and in a few weeks would be covered with Virginia creepers and climbing roses. The seeds and plants had come from England. Care and labor bestowed on these little plots gave a look of permanence to the place. The Somme trickled lazily through some of the gardens, and the stumps of shell-shocked trees lined the banks. Before I addressed the men I was asked to address one hundred officers. As I went out in front of them in a hut and they had a look at me as a Y man, they almost laughed. I knew they were disappointed.

'I thoroughly appreciate the feeling I see spread out on your faces, gentlemen,' I began, 'but in self-defense I may say that I neither started this war nor invented the uniform I wear, and I am convinced that the man or men responsible for either or both should be shot at dawn without the formality of a court-martial.' I was facetious to prepare the ground; then I exerted myself and succeeded in winning them over completely.

The Y headquarters in Ham was a ramshackle building which it was impossible to keep warm. There gathered around the dining-room table three times a day a strange aggregation of camp followers, yeast stirrers, morale raisers, and others. I noticed among them a very small pale man who seemed to be suffering. I asked one of the assistants who he was. 'He is Sir Harry Johnston,' he said, 'and I wish to God he'd go home. He's a good deal of a nuisance.'

'Sir Harry Johnston?'

'Yes.'

'My dear man, he may be feeble now, but do you know that he added a million square miles to the British Empire? That he is a scientist, an author, an explorer, and a great governor of colonies?'

No, he did n't know, and he did n't care.

I found out that Sir Harry had become a nuisance by asking for wood for the stove in his room and sometimes for a little hot water. That night I went scrounging for firewood. Next morning very early I lit the fire in his room, greased his top-boots, got him shaving water and a mug of tea. I did it all stealthily, noiselessly. When all was ready I pulled the front of my steel helmet down over my brow and awoke him.

'What — what!' he said as he looked around.

'Your shaving water is on the stove, sir; your boots are greased; and I thought you would like a mug of hot tea.'

'Who are you?' he asked. 'I must be dreaming.'

'Oh, I'm just a batman at large, sir. I have to move around a good deal, but as long as I am here I shall attend to your fire and make you comfortable.' And I walked quickly out of the place.

III

The night before the great debacle I was scheduled to address officers in the old Ham Opera House. I had talked to ten thousand men during the day and I was far spent physically, but the sight of two thousand officers of all ranks inspired and strengthened me. Somehow in the midst of that address coming events cast their shadow on my soul and I talked as I had never talked before. Thoughts and words new and strange and perhaps somewhat weird came to me, and instead of the ordinary mixture of humor and pathos and vision it was all vision, and spiritual in the highest degree. I can recall only the closing words, because a colonel asked me later to write them in his diary: —

'We are not puppets in an Olympian show, playing for the amusement of the gods. We are not victims of a blind farce — consciously or unconsciously. We are hammering out on a mighty anvil the birth certificate of a new world. I salute you, sons of Vulcan, sons of God, as you go out to the forge!

'Scoop down that beetling mountain,
And raze yon jutting cape;
A world is on your anvil —
Now smite it into shape.'

Next morning the dance of death began. All lecturers, amusers, and instructors were ordered home — to England. I was the only exception. The Germans opened fire on a fifty-mile front. The earth shook and trembled. Many camp followers seemed to go crazy. There was a rumor that we were surrounded, hemmed in. I went out, invented a counter-rumor, came back laughing and spread it. I laughed the fear out of every man's soul around me except one — a Presbyterian minister, who had an idea that God was laughing at us.

'What makes you think so?'

'The Bible says He shall mock at our calamities and laugh when our fear cometh.'

'Don't worry, brother,' I said. 'God may smile at our stupidity, — I don't see how He could help it, — but He is too much of a gentleman to laugh at calamity!'

Lorries came for the others to take them to the coast, and I was driven in an army car to the 50th Division at Haroomers. For twenty miles along the route the British cavalry stood in readiness — the men at the horses' heads, bridles in hand. Lances gleamed in the sunlight, horses pawed the ground restlessly, but there was no noise — not a sound; not a word of command broke the stillness. A sense of power seemed to charge the very air. The Artillery Reserve was in the sunken roads; overhead British planes kept off the eyes of the enemy.

The 50th Division was entraining for the front when I arrived. I returned to Ham. On the way we met miles and miles of ambulances carrying back the broken bodies that were the morning's toll of German gunnery. Chaos reigned at Ham. The Germans could have reduced it to ashes, but they needed it as a base, probably, and spared it. But the British could not hold it. In one single day they had been pushed back thirty kilometres.

I selected my own work and at Ham railroad station attended all night to the 'walking wounded' — that is, men whose wounds permitted them to walk back from the fight and leave the casualty clearing stations for the more seriously wounded. They straggled in all through the night, fingers gone, heads, arms, and bodies swathed — temporary dressings they had had near the line. We gave them refreshments and cigarettes, piled them into lorries, twenty at a time, and sent them back.

Next day I helped to entrain the civilian population. The town was to

be totally evacuated. The last person to be entrained was an old woman who limped along with a few worldly possessions in a bed sheet. I picked her up in my arms and carried her into a compartment. Then I gathered her bundle and put it by her side. She put both her long lean arms around my neck and, kissing me on both cheeks, sighed, 'Ah, M'sieur Tommy!'

One phase of the aftermath was the thousands of men who became separated from their regiments and battalions. Hearing that there were thousands of such men at a railhead called Abancourt, I asked to be sent there. The Y man did n't know me, and said the men did n't want meetings. I had to ignore him, but I tried to do it kindly and diplomatically. I had signs painted and hung around announcing that at a certain hour there would be a one-man show. Two thousand turned up. I gave my programme, lengthening the humor, shortening the serious appeal. At the second meeting I had seven thousand.

In that region there were about twenty thousand men. Coming back from the camps one night, I was groping my way along the railway tracks when I heard voices. I listened. They were Irish voices, but there were so many freight cars that I could n't, in the darkness, discover where they were.

'Who are ye?' yelled a voice in answer to my call.

'It 's mesilf,' I said, 'and I'm looking for a fast train to the hills of Donegal!'

'This is it; come over here an' let 's look at ye, an' don't stand there foolin' us. Shure we have n't had a bite to ate since th' battle of Waterloo!'

They had shunted in there in the darkness and had n't the slightest idea where they were. I piloted the fifty of them to the nearest Y, where they had something to eat and stocked up on tobacco.

IV

In the British Army morale-raising was a hit-or-miss sort of thing. It was of more importance than guns, but nobody in the High Command had any idea of its value. Most of the officers with whom I talked about the psychology of war seemed to think that the best use the Army could make of psychology was in dealing with cases of shell shock. I was not in a position to advise the British Army; I could only demonstrate and muddle through like the rest when the theory did n't work.

I was sent out to the 18th Division on the Somme just as the men came out of the front line for a two weeks' rest. The general was on furlough, and a brilliant young colonel was in command. There was a deadlock in the minds of the soldiers. They had been fighting until war had become the natural thing. They were 'fed up.' It was my job to break that deadlock. A new method, a new dynamic, was necessary. I was equipped by military experience, and I talked to them as an older comrade; I wore two bits of ribbon on my coat which reminded them that I was one of those old-timers who had served in the Gordon Expedition. I had a keen sense of humor, and an array of facts that amazed them. When they had laughed with me for half an hour they were mine.

War arouses all the fear instincts. All men have fear, in varying degrees. I analyzed fear so that every man could distinguish it from its results. I told a story about the Duke of Wellington. An artist who was painting his portrait said, 'My lord, I should like to see the look you had on your face at Quatre Bras.' 'Oh,' said the Duke, 'if you want me as I was that morning, paint me crawling on my belly in a ditch.'

Every branch of the division re-

ceived the best I had, and every man in that division became my friend. I gave talks on literature. I outlined an educational scheme and helped to choose an educational director. I went to Dieppe and selected two thousand volumes for a divisional library. The division was covered in a week, and it was a complete job in morale-raising. I was on my feet talking an average of seven hours a day. When the car taking me to Mers for a day's rest drew up at the door of the inn the driver found me crumpled up in a heap in the back seat. I was carried in and put to bed. Two days later I was on my way to another appointment.

General Jackson, commanding the 50th Division, had heard of me in the War Office, and made a special request that I be sent to his division in the Dieppe area. There I did for the 50th Division what I had done for the 18th.

The Honorable Artillery Company has a regimental history that runs back to the middle of the twelfth century. It was a distinguished unit during the war, and went through it without having a court-martial — a very remarkable tribute to discipline and spirit. The commanding officer in introducing me said I was 'the funniest man in France' — a statement he amplified by telling two of my best stories. Such an introduction, of course, is fatal to humor. It would have paralyzed a Mark Twain.

My task was one of the most difficult I had ever known. I politely disclaimed all credit for the reputation the commandant had given me. 'It is with the Irish, gentlemen, in the matter of humor, as it is with the English in the matter of war — we just blunder into it and blunder out again. The things you English would consider funny are to me very serious — in fact, our stupidity is often looked upon as humorous. When I became a writer I joined a literary club in New York. I used to see men play a game called poker — I am sure nobody here ever heard of the game. It's peculiarly an American institution. Well, I had never played cards, but when I saw men get such a barrel of fun out of "penny ante" I thought I should like to learn. So I was told the value of certain card combinations — and here let me explain some of these.' A roar of laughter greeted this assumption of innocence — a nest of inveterate poker players were sitting right in front of me. 'Well,' I continued, 'I got a hand, and one of the five cards seemed worthless, so I asked for another. Two of the four players were satisfied with what they got at first. So the chips began to pile up. I seemed to hold on — in fact, they all gave in. The last man to succumb asked me what I had. Not being as familiar as are old-timers with the names of the cards, I said: "I have four ones!"'

This set the place in a roar. My face was as devoid of a smile as a wooden Indian's.

'Well, would you believe it,' I continued, when they had quieted down, 'that man who made me show what I had seemed annoyed, and he said, "What the hell did you want — five?" Of course those "ones" were aces, I may explain.'

Three or four stories set me right, and I gave my lecture. When I finished, the commandant arose amid wild cheering and said: 'I think you will all agree with me that this is an occasion for H. A. C. fire.' The officers rose to their feet instantly and, moving their right hands from side to side as if they held bombs, made a fizzing sound as they did so. After nine moves they gave a wild yell. This peculiar salutation, I was told, is very rarely given. To me it was of small concern that it was given. That it was evoked was important.

V

I was ordered to visit the Field Marshal's headquarters and address his staff officers — a small army in themselves. Going to Montreuil was like going to Tibet. It was supposed to be a great privilege and something of an honor. To those in line for honors and privileges I presume it was; but I was not in line.

I addressed the staff in two groups — one at 6 and the other at 9 P.M. I was told to talk to them as if they were all Tommies. What I should have liked to do was to repeat an address I once gave to the officers of a division, when I said: 'Gentlemen, I am Tommy Atkins. I died on the Somme in 1916. I have come back from the dead for an hour to tell you what I think of you.' Which I proceeded to do.

During the first fifteen minutes here at Haig's headquarters the atmosphere was cold. The officers sat like gravestones coldly examining this new specimen. A very profane thought fluttered through my brain. Its expression would have produced shell shock. So I began to tell some stories not on the programme.

'An Australian sheep farmer bumped into a staff officer on the Strand. The digger apologized as any sheep farmer would. "Why don't you salute me?" asked the irritated officer. "Kid," said the Australian, "I'm not here for physical exercise!"'

This story gave some facial latitude, a rehearsal for a smile. The next one made them laugh, and when they were thawed out I went on with my talk; at the close they applauded generously. But there was as much chance of getting a new idea adopted, especially a psychological idea, as there would be of passing a prohibition bill in the House of Commons. At the second meeting I jollied them, and when they were slow to catch a joke I would say, 'Never mind that one, gentlemen — I have another!' When I got away from that stifling atmosphere of pomp, red tape, bowing and scraping, and fear, I had an idea that I should like to get drunk or do something ridiculous — just for a change.

I was called to Flexicourt to address a large gathering of officers of the Fourth Army Corps, commanded by Sir Henry Rawlinson. The meeting was in a large marquee tent, and I was ten minutes late. Half a dozen generals stood outside the side entrance. I walked briskly from the car and, saluting them, announced myself with an apology for my lateness, due to a faulty tire.

'Well, sir,' the senior general said, 'you come to us with a wonderful reputation — can you live up to it?' His tone and look seemed half in fun yet very much in earnest. I could n't sit down and think it over, so I just blurted out what came to me: —

'No, sir, I can't; but I can blunder along like the rest of you!'

There was a moment's silence, during which I again saluted and passed into the tent. The generals followed me, and as they took the seats reserved for them they were still laughing.

At that meeting my humor failed. Before I had been speaking five minutes I became possessed of a sense of sadness. The audience was mentally restless and so affected me that I abandoned my usual appeal and spoke of the immortality of the soul and the glory of adding something to the tradition of the race. Where had my reputation gone? What would the generals think of such an address?

'Just the thing we all needed,' said one of the generals, and the others concurred. I understood it all when, in Sir Henry Rawlinson's room half an hour later, he told me that his army was

going into action at four in the morning. When I told him how I felt at the meeting and how I was unconsciously led from the beaten track, he said I had just addressed men who in twelve hours would be in their graves. 'You did n't know; they did n't, either; but both of you got it by intuition.' I was kept addressing various units until midnight — the Royal Canadian Dragoons, French mortar men, Strathcona Horse, and machine-gun units. Then at the window of my billet on the main street I sat and watched the long procession of guns and men pass along to be swallowed up in the mouth of hell. They were singing now, — singing the old songs with the old gusto, — but at dawn thousands of them would be leaving a vacant place in the heart of the world.

At four the guns belched forth their lava of death. At seven I was in the general's map room listening to the record of the three hours' slaughter. At eight I was off again to the reserves — more mind-sweeping, more speeches to crowds within the range of the guns. Then suddenly, as I addressed a battalion, my voice ceased. I was talking, but there was no sound. I realized the situation instantly and indicated to the commander that I was 'all in.' For a moment the men laughed, but when they saw tears streaming down my cheeks they broke into cheers, and I could hear them still cheering when I was on my way toward the Fourth Army Medical Corps.

I was ordered to London. Medical men warned me that I had exhausted the life force of years in a few months; I was to make up my mind to an inevitable collapse. I became haggard. My eyes sunk in my head. I was weak. At Calais another examination confirmed the first. They ticketed and labeled me for a London hospital. In my inner consciousness I did n't believe a word the doctors said, but there were disabilities I could not deny. Even if I had come to the end of my rope, I was satisfied — better a thousand times to wear out than to rust out, and it had been a wonderful experience.

Instead of going to a hospital I went to the home of a mental healer, a man I knew. I wrote on a slip of paper: 'How soon can you get me back to France?' I heard him laugh, but knew no more for some hours. I had collapsed. When I came back to consciousness my friend was sitting beside me. He picked up the slip of paper and showed it to me, and said, 'In a few days.' The words sent a glow all through my body. I took some warm milk and went to sleep. I slept for six hours, and when I awoke I got up — tottering, it is true; but my voice had come back, and hope revived. In a few days I was quite ready to return. I wrote a letter to the Adjutant General, asking him to permit me to dispense with the ghastly stock collar that always seemed to suffocate me. It was hurtful to my voice and irritating to my mind. I begged the Y officials to intercede for me. It was the only favor I had ever asked either from the Government or from the Y. The former ignored it, and the latter looked upon it as one of my pleasantries and evaded it. I was so sure that I should be accorded this privilege that I had a khaki jacket made with a turned-down collar.

VI

I was in the Étaples area. Three hundred thousand men were there. I had been around for nearly a week — borne about like a bag of flour from one part of the district to another to speak to small groups. One night there was a big entertainment. The 'talent' did n't turn up and the leaders were commandeering anything they could get

hold of to pad the programme. By this time I was inured to the hit-or-miss methods and took things as they came, in big lots or small doses. I suggested that I could help them out. It was a big crowd and I just opened up all the stops and held them for an hour. The Y staff woke up — they really did — and thereafter I was busy.

One night in an air raid about seven hundred men were killed. Next morning the London papers charged the Germans with bombing hospitals. One German airman was brought down, unhurt. When he was before the commanding officer he showed photographs of the area. There was not a single red cross painted on a hospital, and around the hospitals were ammunition dumps, railways, and camps with tens of thousands of men, including the Life Guards. When the English Tommies read the papers they were angry, and the general comment was: 'It ain't cricket.'

A Scotch regiment had quite a different reaction. Many of their friends had been killed, and as a reprisal they made up their minds to break into the German prison camps and bayonet the prisoners. I was let into the secret of the intended reprisal and made it my business to prevent murder by informing those in command. Every evening thereafter for some weeks the embittered troops were marched to the seaside and marched back in the morning.

The morning after the raid red crosses were painted on the hospitals and photographed before the paint was dry. These photographs were published as evidence of German ruthlessness.

During September and October 1918 I had my greatest satisfaction in my work. I made use of the last ounce of my energy, and enjoyed every day of the whirlwind of activity. The fighting men knew little of the power-of-mind stuff; the camp followers knew less. I blamed nobody, criticized nothing. I looked upon every day as a little lifetime in itself, and functioned to the extent of my ability in its given tasks.

When the Germans were swept back the Y advanced with the troops. Five new Y stations had to be established in one day. I took charge in Péronne that day. The first item was the marching of German prisoners from their stockade to the Y on St. Fursy Street, where they were put to work renovating the wrecked building. The mayor of the town gave me an orderly, and I sent him for the prisoners. All he had to do was to fix a bayonet in his rifle and march beside them. But he was an Army Service Corps man and had never handled a rifle. I got him an old German rifle-and-saw bayonet, put him through a few moves, and marched him off. He brought the prisoners, but as they marched into the yard it was a German cavalryman who carried the rifle on his shoulder and not the orderly.

When I assigned the men to their work I began to take stock of the Y larder. Uncle Remus's receipt for rabbit pie was: 'Fust you done gone catch a nice fat rabbit.' The rabbit of the Y larder was bully beef, — six cans, — a pound of margarine, and eleven potatoes. There was n't a shop within fifty miles. Two American officers called, and they were starving. While I was wondering what I could give them an orderly came in for a gallon of petrol. Certainly, but what had he to trade for it? A loaf of bread. Fine! I gave him the petrol and went with him for the bread. In a corner of the hut — it was the office of the military police — I saw a small box of onions. I got them for a hundred cigarettes. I returned and fed the Americans on coffee and bread. A young officer looking for a ride toward

Calais came in. Through him I got in touch with the Transport Department. They would lend us a lorry to bring stores from Amiens, if we would give them a thousand francs' worth of cigarettes. I made the deal.

A weary subaltern came for a night's lodging. Yes, of course, in return for service. 'You have rank and prestige,' I said; 'just lend me your dignity for the rest of the day, and we will see you to the coast to-morrow.' He went foraging, and his achievements added considerably to our comfort, if not to our reputation. All forenoon men from all parts of the front came straggling in, for tea, for cigarettes, for the *Daily Scream*, for stamps. The orderly reported that a German prisoner was doing something reprehensible upstairs. I found him having a bath in a tin dish, and punished him by making him peel the onions. Later I saw that the prisoners all had a bath.

The prisoners fared poorly in food that noontime. Rice and raisins and a drink made with a yellow powder supposed to make lemonade were all they got. It was all we had. A message came from a part of the front line that a brigade of artillery had n't a cigarette among them. I got a car and a driver, took ten thousand packages of cigarettes and a case of biscuits, and went up the line. Our destination was just beyond Maissemy, but we lost our way. We drove up a hill in order to get a view, and at the top we found ourselves between the German and British balloons. As soon as we stopped, a shell whizzed over our heads. I saw a Red Cross sign about two hundred yards away, with two men standing beside it. We left the car and joined them in order to find out where we were, and a quick succession of shells led us to believe that our car perhaps was the objective. The red cross marked a casualty clearing station — a hole in the ground, twenty feet deep.

In the Red Cross dugout we were treated to tea and made comfortable as long as the strafing continued. To our amazement the car was there when we returned — and intact. We found the artillery and distributed the cigarettes and biscuits. The men came at us for the cigarettes like famished wolves; I had never seen men so frenzied. Cool and calm when around them fellow humans were being blown to shreds — and half crazy for want of a cigarette! I made a short speech to each battery; then returned to Péronne and resumed the problem of providing a meal for half a dozen hungry Y men.

I fried the onions on a boiler lid. When well done I mixed them with the bully beef, and over that I grated some cheese. The eleven potatoes I cut up and stuck into the stuff like eggs in a salad. There were some strange and unusual odors, but a severe dose of pepper allayed their vehemence. The prisoners had cleaned the place. The tablecloth was a clean newspaper. When the famished workers returned they were overjoyed to see such a nice layout. Oh, yes, I forgot — we had soup.

'What did you make that soup of?' asked the leader.

'A ham bone.'

'Where did you get it?'

'In the cellar.'

'That was n't ham,' he said. 'It was the hip joint of a mule.'

'Well, in that case, you'll have a strong kick in your work to-morrow.'

VII

One day after the Armistice had been signed the General informed me that the King was to inspect the Division and that I was to be presented to His Majesty, if I cared for the honor. He thought there might be something

in the American mind opposed to royal recognition. And that reminds me that once in a speech I had referred to a time when the American colonists 'told George III where to get off; and we're now telling George the — what's the King's number?' I asked the audience, having really forgotten. The men went into spasms of laughter. It seemed the funniest thing they had ever heard. 'What is his number?' The slip went so well that I deliberately used it hundreds of times afterward to produce the laugh, and it never failed.

One high official hoped I would n't joke with the King or tell him a funny story. He was told — but doubted it — that I knew how to behave myself before kings. Seven men of the thirty or forty thousand were selected for the honor of presentation, and we were instructed by an expert in court manners. At this juncture it suddenly occurred to me that, since the war was actually over, I could dispense with the stupid stock collar and face the King in comfort. I put on my double-breasted khaki jacket, with khaki shirt, turned-down attached collar, and four-in-hand tie. This was a luxury and made me human again.

The King had wired instructions that there were to be no ordered or formal cheers, no stiff-starched parade. The men were to be loosely arranged and left entirely to their own initiative. As I was the civilian of the group to be presented I stood at the tail end of the line. It just happened, however, that the royal car stopped at that end and I was the first to be introduced. Englishmen are sparing in praise and incapable of fulsome flattery, but that day General Jackson certainly spread it on generously as he told the King of my services. The fact that I was an American reconciled His Majesty to my unusual uniform, and on that double-breasted jacket were two bits of ribbon which he recognized.

'But you were in Egypt,' he said, looking at the ribbons.

'Yes, sir, I wore the uniform of Queen Victoria in the Gordon Relief Expedition.'

'Ah,' he said, 'then originally you were an Englishman!'

'No, Your Majesty; originally I was just an Irishman.'

The King laughed; he laughed heartily; but in my mind there was absolutely no idea of being humorous.

'Well,' he said, 'I thank you for coming back. I thank you for your splendid work.' And a second time he extended his hand. But that was n't all of the conversation. He asked me what 'morale-raising' meant. The term seemed as unfamiliar to him as the actuality was to his High Command. A few minutes after the King had passed, the Prince of Wales came.

'I was not here when the King was talking to you,' said the Prince, 'but the General has been telling me about your splendid work and I want to add my thanks.'

It was all over in a few minutes. The battalions melted away. The General and his staff mounted their horses and rode back to Doulers, followed by a lone lancer on a gray charger. From his long lance there fluttered in the wind a little red and white pennant — a splash of color, a touch of the old régime, that fixed in my memory an historic example of a king functioning as father to his divisions of fighting men.

It was over a cup of tea beside a warm fire in a London club that I heard the last word of the high official who had some suspicion that I should cave in before royalty.

'Well,' he said, 'I'll be hanged if he did n't joke with the King after all — don't you know!'

(Further chapters of Mr. Irvine's autobiography will appear in February)

LINCOLN'S WASHINGTON

Recollections of a Journalist Who Knew Everybody

BY WILLIAM A. CROFFUT

I

THE city of Washington during the Civil War was a desolation. The Capitol's unfinished dome and wings looked like a Roman ruin. Secretary Seward and his clerks were cooped in a small and dingy brick building where the north end of the Treasury rears its superb classic colonnade, and Secretary Stanton with his small department filled an insignificant building where now is the forelawn of the White House.

Along the north edge of the Mall slowly crept and soaked through the city a fetid bayou called, by courtesy, 'The Canal,' floating dead cats and all kinds of putridity and reeking with pestilential odors. Cattle, swine, goats, sheep, and geese ran at large everywhere. There were only two short sewers in the entire city, and these were so choked as to back the contents into cellars and stores on Pennsylvania Avenue. Happy hogs wallowed in the gutters. At night the city was in darkness, scarcely ameliorated by a faint glim on remote corners, and the rustic lantern was by no means unknown.

Few of the streets had any pretense of pavement. Some were paved with cobblestones so unstable as to be worse than none at all. On wet days Pennsylvania Avenue was a river of mud and filth in which carts and even light buggies were often mired so deep as to be extricated with great difficulty. The sidewalks were filled with Union soldiers on parole or absent without leave, and many of the houses concealed members of Mosby's guerrillas acting as spies and waiting to dodge back across the river. There were forty-eight forts around the city, and within the circumvallation were eighteen vast hospitals, sheltering thousands of sick and wounded. To make the round of these was a melancholy task indeed.

It was in the fall of 1861 that our activities were suddenly increased. The battle of Bull Run was over; McClellan was slowly reorganizing the Army of the Potomac; masterly inactivity prevailed, and life in Washington was rather a sleepy affair. Opportunely a happy idea presented itself and moved me to insert in the morning paper of the city, the *National Republican*, this paragraph: —

NOTICE. — Young men in Washington who desire to have a course of lectures during the winter similar to those of northern cities are invited to meet this evening at ——.

Responsive to the invitation, several young men, mostly strangers to each other, met at my rooms. A comparison of views revealed the fact that they were all heartily in favor of the abolition of slavery, and one, Lewis Clephane, manager of the *National Era*,

which had a year before been the victim of a proslavery mob for publishing Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, had just been appointed postmaster of the city by President Lincoln. We took counsel together, and an adjourned meeting was held at Clephane's residence the next week.

On that occasion at least twenty young men were present, and much interest was manifested. About nine o'clock there was a knock at the door and it was opened to admit a venerable man with long flowing white hair and beard like Raphael's Saint Jerome, a quick, nervous manner, a glowing pink face, and vivacious and merry blue eyes. He paused, leaned against the door, and said, 'Gentlemen, I saw an advertisement summoning young men to come here to consult to-night, and here I am!'

The little speech was greeted with a welcome of applause and laughter, and Mr. John R. French, of the Treasury Department, rose and introduced the newcomer as the Reverend John Pierpont. We knew that the poet and apostle of temperance had come down as chaplain of a Massachusetts regiment at the age of seventy-six, and that Charles Sumner had rescued him from the swamps of Virginia and induced him to accept a clerkship under Mr. Chase. Without much discussion, or even consideration, we elected this 'young man' to be our president, organizing as the Washington Lecture Association.

II

In our advertisement authorized by that meeting it was announced that, 'desiring to aid in placing the community of which they form a part on a higher plane in regard to literature, loyalty, and liberty, one hundred citizens of Washington have united in an organization with the present design of a course of lectures by men who have earned a reputation for the highest culture and the most earnest patriotism.' And we named the men already on our list — Wendell Phillips, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, Edward Everett, Orestes A. Brownson, Daniel S. Dickinson, Bayard Taylor, James Russell Lowell, George B. Cheever, Charles G. Ames, Moncure D. Conway, George William Curtis, John Jay, William Goodell, Gerrit Smith, Frederick Douglass, Samuel J. May, Joseph Holt, Anna E. Dickinson, Richard S. Storrs, William Lloyd Garrison, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and George Thompson, the great English abolitionist. Not one of them had ever spoken south of Mason and Dixon's line, and several of them enjoyed the exalted honor of having a perpetual bounty offered for their heads.

As secretary of the Association I was directed to 'engage these lecturers and obtain a suitable hall.' The former duty involved a voluminous correspondence but was comparatively easy, and, in fact, all of them except Everett, Garrison, Beecher, Lowell, and Miss Dickinson, appeared in the course.

The second duty assigned to me was much more easily defined than performed. There was no public hall in Washington that would seat a thousand people, but we wanted to seat two or three thousand. The churches were all closed to us. In this dilemma I made a bold and what seems to me at this distance an audacious request for the House of Representatives, but Speaker Grow instantly and peremptorily vetoed the suggestion. I have an impression that he spoke sharply and severely about it, but do not remember exactly what he said. He probably remarked that I was crazy to imagine that such a preposterous thing was possible.

At any rate, I gave it up, replenished my courage, and immediately went and asked Professor Joseph Henry to give us the large amphitheatre of the Smithsonian. This was apparently worse yet. He was struck with horror at the sacrilegious suggestion and froze me out with harsh words which made me almost wish that I had been burdened with less responsibility. Heavy-hearted, I took all these troubles to the Honorable Owen Lovejoy, with whom I had the privilege of such acquaintance as a zealous young recruit might enjoy with a kind-hearted veteran, and he valiantly entered the lists. 'Henry's an old traitor!' he exclaimed hotly. 'We'll bring him to terms. Come with me.' And he led the way to the rooms of the Honorable Schuyler Colfax. Here, too, was a sympathetic listener. 'I am a regent of the Smithsonian,' Mr. Colfax said, 'and Hamlin is another. I'll see him to-day about it. Call at my residence to-morrow morning at ten o'clock and bring John Pierpont, and we'll do something.'

Dr. Pierpont and I were at Mr. Colfax's door promptly next morning, and were delighted to find the Vice President there waiting. They had arranged for an assault on the fortress of science without delay, and had sent word to Professor Henry and made an appointment. When we had crossed the broad but unkempt Mall and reached the red sandstone pile of Norman towers and turrets constituting the handsomest public building in Washington, its distinguished master was armed with arguments and protests and ready to receive us.

'How can such lectures as you contemplate be permitted here,' he asked, 'when this institution, like science, is nonpartisan and peaceful, and when we do not allow a lecturer to speak even on chemistry without knowing in advance whether his theories are sound? Besides, you would be sure to offend some of the regents.'

This gave Vice President Hamlin the chance he sought.

'Which of the regents would be offended?' he asked.

'Gentlemen from the South,' replied the Professor.

'They are getting scarce,' said Mr. Hamlin. 'Jefferson Davis has gone and is not likely to return at present,' he added, remembering, no doubt, how active Mr. Davis had been as a friend of the Smithsonian and how intimate his family had been with Professor Henry's family.

'Senator Mason is a regent yet,' suggested Mr. Colfax, 'but he has fled from Washington and will not come back to plague you.'

'And the Mayor of Washington has resigned and gone to Richmond,' pursued Hamlin. 'Then look at this,' he added, taking up a list of the new regents President Lincoln had selected, but had not yet appointed, and sticking a pen through it to punctuate the names: 'Fessenden, Trumbull, McPherson, W. B. Astor, W. L. Dayton — none of them will object, and as for Badger, of North Carolina, he has gone home, and is in very bad company; I guess he will not trouble you. If he does, Colfax and I will stand by you. Lincoln will.' (A year later Mr. Badger was expelled from the Board of Regents on motion of Mr. Hamlin.)

For a fortnight, while lecturers were being engaged, the siege of the Smithsonian was carried on. Gradually Professor Henry weakened and prepared to surrender. Lincoln took a hand. It was finally agreed that the dreadful innovation should be tried, but the Professor stipulated that it must be published that it was against his remonstrance, and that the presiding officer should make it distinctly understood at every lecture that the Smithsonian

Institution was in no way responsible for the sentiments avowed.

So, when John Pierpont, the venerable poet, came forward to introduce the first lecturer, Orestes A. Brownson, the distinguished Catholic of Protean creed, he said: —

'Ladies and Gentlemen: I am requested by Professor Henry to announce that the Smithsonian Institution is not in any way responsible for this course of lectures. I do so with pleasure, and desire to add that the Washington Lecture Association is in no way responsible for the Smithsonian Institution.'

And so the course began. Even the first lecture was heard by an audience that crowded the large hall in every part, and it was noticeable that the most radical utterances concerning slavery received the warmest applause. Dr. Brownson became an abolitionist during the next few months, for his two sons had perished in the war.

III

The course was a success from the beginning. Brownson was followed by Daniel S. Dickinson, George William Curtis, and Bayard Taylor. For months the audiences increased, both in enthusiasm and in numbers, so far as a full hall could become fuller, till it was necessary to go very early to get a seat of any sort. There were always scores of Senators and Representatives in the hall. Cabinet officers often lent their approval by occupying seats on the platform; but when Wendell Phillips lectured, as he did three times, I think they avoided conspicuousness by taking seats in the body of the hall.

This period was marked by that outpouring of anonymous letters which often accompanies great excitement. Most of the lecturers experienced the sensation of having their lives threatened while they were in Washington. Mr. Pierpont was menaced both through the post office and orally, and even the unobtrusive secretary had his share of this unpleasant attention in letters bearing mysterious suggestions and a great variety of badly drawn skulls and amorphous coffins.

In response to the invitation to come, Horace Greeley replied, 'Yes. I was intending to come down there to talk, anyway; and I am glad to have this chance — especially as I have already earned the reputation of being the poorest public speaker in America.' When he arrived he asked me if Lincoln would be present. I did not know, but at his suggestion I went at once to the White House and asked the President if he would attend.

'Yes, I will,' he said. 'I can get away, can't I, Hay? I never heard Greeley, and I want to hear him. In print every one of his words seems to weigh about a ton; I want to see what he has to say about us.'

So the President came, and consented to be perched on the high platform immediately at the great editor's right. Near him were Secretaries Gideon Wells and Edward Bates, and at Greeley's left sat the chief of the Treasury, Salmon P. Chase, glowing with pleasure at the significance of the occasion. Before introducing the speaker, President Pierpont began, as usual, 'It is my duty and pleasure to announce to you, ladies and gentlemen, that the Smithsonian Insti —' The rest of the sentence, which had become amusingly familiar, was drowned in a great roar of laughter. Mr. Lincoln turned, with a puzzled smile, and asked the nearest officer of the Association what it meant. When it was briefly explained as the proclamation required by the Smithsonian at the beginning of each lecture, he

joined in the laugh heartily, though a trifle behindhand. The object of it — Professor Henry — was within ten feet, concealed from the audience behind the little door that opened on the platform from the rear. Here, after the first lecture, he was generally found listening to the dangerous utterances, but in his next report to Congress he complained that the experiment had raised up enemies for the Smithsonian and ought not to be repeated.

When Mr. Greeley turned and addressed himself personally to Mr. Lincoln, who sat almost within arm's length, appealing to him to cease trying to make peace with the Mammon of Unrighteousness, but to free the blacks and arm them, proving equal to his high responsibility in the crisis of the nation's fate, the audience, which had already listened to the same injunction more than once, rose and uttered a wild and prolonged cheer and cry of joy. A more dramatic scene has seldom been witnessed by any popular assembly.

IV

It will be noticed that four of our most distinguished orators did not appear in this course — Edward Everett, Anna Dickinson, William Lloyd Garrison, and Henry Ward Beecher.

Mr. Everett curtly replied to the secretary, 'I thank you, but I cannot come. There has been too much talking already.' It will be remembered that he had been defeated the year before for Vice President.

Miss Dickinson had peremptory engagements — her card was full. But she came two years later and delivered her 'Joan of Arc' in the Senate Chamber to a record audience, the Vice President in the chair.

Mr. Garrison was not invited. Over him there was what might be called a quarrel in the executive committee of the Association, which was about evenly divided on the subject, part of the members insisting that he was the best representative of the principles which the government was contending for, and the other half insisting that a man who pronounced the Constitution of the United States 'a covenant with death and a league with hell' would not be likely to strengthen the war for the Union. The contest over him went on week after week without settlement, while he sat in the *Liberator* office at Boston, wondering why he did not hear from Washington.

Getting a negative from Mr. Beecher, I went to Brooklyn to make a personal appeal to him. When I called at the house on the Heights after dinner, he had already left to deliver a lecture, but was expected home at eleven. Mrs. Beecher kindly urged me to wait and see him.

'Perhaps you may get him,' she said. 'I want him to go to Washington, and will add my appeal to yours. I want him to go, though I see so little of him. I do not complain of his absence, for a woman who marries a popular favorite must be ready to divide him with the public. It keeps getting worse, though, every year. When I married him I merely had to share him with the congregation, but since then,' she added with a pathetic smile, 'he has married the Platform and the Press and the Goddess of Liberty, and I miss him a good deal. However, I want him to go to Washington to speak, and I think it is a thing he ought to do.'

I waited. At last Mr. Beecher returned, and, leaving in the front parlor someone who had accompanied him, he came through into the family sitting room. Well remembered is the breezy gesture with which he flung off his overcoat, as who should say, 'Here's Vitality for you.'

Being presented, I told my errand, outlined our purpose, and offered him two hundred dollars for a lecture — the highest price then paid anywhere. 'Don't decide hastily, Henry,' said Mrs. Beecher. 'I think you ought to go. Mr. Lincoln will perhaps attend. You can do good there. It seems to me the occasion calls for you.'

He walked up and down the room a few times, talking about Washington city and asking questions about our course, and then he said, 'No, I can't think of going. I've got just all I can carry. I'd like to speak in Washington very much and especially to see Lincoln, but I can't get away. I can fix you out, though. We have here the most brilliant and eloquent young man I have ever known. Take him!' And he put his head out through the folding door and said, 'Come here, Theodore!'

A tall and handsome youth entered and I was presented to him. We exclaimed that we had seen each other before. It was Theodore Tilton.

'He's just the man you want on these questions,' persisted the great preacher. 'An original thinker, and a fervent and electric speaker — and he's one of my chickens!' added Mr. Beecher. As Mr. Tilton blushed a little and disclaimed the compliment of eloquence, I recalled that my commission did not include the engagement of any substitute, but I thanked them for the chance presented and agreed to lay the suggestion before the board on returning to Washington. This was done, but the conclusion was unanimous that we would not hear from Plymouth Church vicariously. A few years later I sat through the fearful trial of Mr. Beecher in the suit brought by his 'chicken' for $100,000 damages for the destruction of his family.

I wrote to John G. Whittier and asked him if he would address such an audience as ours. He answered, 'I do not talk in public. I wish that great good may come of thy work. But thy way is not my way.'

V

One or two other episodes of these lectures may be worth recalling. Emerson spoke on 'American Civilization,' in February 1862, and Mr. Lincoln sat upon the platform. The lecturer declared, 'Emancipation is the demand of civilization. That is a principle; everything else is intrigue. What is so foolish as the assertion that the blacks will be made furious and revengeful by being given freedom and wages?' Like Thurlow Weed and many other publicists, he favored paying for the slaves, and he and Secretary Seward had a long talk with the President the next day upon the subject. It was in this lecture of Mr. Emerson that the fine epigram was first heard: 'Let's hitch our wagon to a star.'

When Wendell Phillips came to Washington I waited upon him to complete the business arrangements.

'What sort of audience is it?' he asked. I told him as well as I could.

'I feel afraid and embarrassed,' he said. When I expressed astonishment at hearing he was ever afraid of any audience, he said, 'I am always afraid. It is a tremendous responsibility, to try to interest a crowd of intelligent, perhaps learned persons, whom you don't know and never saw before. Why, I sometimes have stood paralyzed in front of an audience with the audacity of it — tongue-tied and not knowing what to say next.'

Phillips had a musical voice which rang out like a trumpet when his deep feeling was enlisted. His handsome face covered a volcanic and emotional nature and the pleasant lips easily broke into invective. He said to me on

leaving for Boston, 'A great enterprise this of yours, but tell your association for me that it will leave its good work half done if it fails to secure Garrison.'

From Cincinnati Phillips wrote to Ann Phillips in Boston, 'Assure Garrison that Washington is as safe for him as New York is. I think he ought to go there and lecture. He knows not the enthusiasm with which he will be received or the good he will do.' Garrison replied to this, 'One reason why I do not go to Washington is that I have not been invited.' He then disposed of the objections that had been made to him by saying, 'I am in the position of Benedick in the play. When I said I would not support the Constitution because it was a covenant with death and a league with hell, I had no idea that I should live to see death and hell secede from the Constitution.' Garrison visited Washington later and had a pleasant interview with Mr. Lincoln. The President alluded to his guest's experience in having been mobbed and put in jail in Baltimore in 1830, and, being told that the old jail was torn down, he added, 'Then you could n't get out of jail, eh? And now you can't get in.'

John Jay lectured in full evening dress and wore white kid gloves which he quietly slipped off as he proceeded. After his lecture I called on him at Willard's to see if he had been paid and had received proper attention. I asked if our treasurer had called.

'No, I think not; have n't seen him,' he answered. And then, after a pause, he added, 'I hope he'll call soon.'

His anxiety seemed a trifle odd, but I reassured him, and said that such a visit would not be forgotten or long postponed, intending to remind and hasten the treasurer as soon as I went out. As I rose to go, Mr. Jay said with much earnestness, 'I am afraid your treasurer will neglect to call. Can't you and I fix it?'

Embarrassed at the suggestion, and somewhat confused by the impossibility of doing so, I merely murmured, 'I am not prepared just now.'

'How much do you need in all?' he inquired.

I told him his question was not understood.

'How much does your association need?' he repeated.

The significance of his mistake struck me so humorously that I sat down and laughed, quite speechless. On recovering words I explained.

'You meant to hire me?' he gasped with astonishment. 'Well, that beats all I ever heard of! This lecture course actually pays? And in Washington! Now I have hope of the country!'

So his fee was left in the treasury and on inquiry we found that he was a millionaire. The subject of his lecture was 'The Great Conspiracy and England's Neutrality.' We cleared two thousand dollars that winter, and when summer came we divided it up and made personal distribution of food, medicines, and various luxuries among the soldiers, who were already clustered by the ten thousand in the hospitals on the hillsides above Washington.

It is not too much to say that these lectures helped to change the moral atmosphere of Washington. From being fanatically proslavery, the capital city became neutral; to intolerance succeeded tolerance; to treason, loyalty; to sectionalism, nationalism; and even the army felt itself less a trespasser on the soil and rights of others after Greeley, Phillips, and Douglass had faced friends and enemies in the spacious semicircle of seats in the Smithsonian. Both Cabinet and Congress acknowledged the support which these courageous addresses gave, and it will never be known how much influence

they had in the enactment of that law which six months later decreed the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia.

VI

During these tumultuous years Walt Whitman occupied the second-floor hall bedroom of the house where I boarded. One morning when we met on the stairs he told me he had been dismissed from his clerkship by Secretary Harlan. He did not know the cause, but the Secretary made no secret of the fact that he had turned the 'good gray poet' out of office because he considered *Leaves of Grass* an indecent book, the circulation of which ought to be diminished instead of increased. Of course the purpose miscarried, and a new edition of the improper book was immediately called for and exhausted.

Whitman laughed at the alleged salacity, and he was restored, or rather reappointed to another place within a year by Attorney-General Speed, who did not classify the book with erotic verse of an extreme type. In the resulting excitement Whitman was called to the lecture field, but the call was not a very loud one. His long and flowing white hair and beard made a picturesque halo around his face which his extravagant linen collar and cuffs emphasized. But all Byronic affectations did not avail, and he was never a success upon the platform.

I recall how one noon about this time I met six of the Treasury's literati at the little lunch table spread in the lower west corridor of the Department. The venerable poet John Pierpont and I, who greatly admired him, went downstairs together from our adjoining desks, — and it was something of a climb for the old man of eighty before the elevator era, — and there, seated on a bench near the door, taking rolls and coffee, were Edmund Stedman, A. B. Johnson, Sumner's private secretary, and John J. Piatt, also a fertile and delicate mind, afterward useful in diplomacy. They were congenial companions. As we were taking off the edge of the midday appetite, Walt Whitman and W. D. O'Connor, his enthusiastic laureate, appeared and joined the group. All of them had produced something notable, and all of them except Pierpont did much better work afterward.

One trifling detail of the luncheon I remember: Piatt ate mince pie, at which Stedman expressed his mocking horror, and Pierpont said, 'Piatt, is that the ambrosia you eat when you go to Parnassus? When I eat it, I go to Tartarus!' It is perhaps not odd that I never go out of the west door of the Treasury Department without thinking of Pierpont, Stedman, Piatt, Johnson, O'Connor, and Whitman, and the mince pie of that noontime long ago.

This small and studious coterie of clerks met weekly at this time to familiarize themselves with the French language. To one of them Victor Hugo kindly sent advance proofs of *Les Misérables*, and they employed their evenings in translating the novel orally into English, passing the proofs from hand to hand for that purpose. Whitman was the most expert interpreter, and when the rest were stalled, with the thieves' argot, he was usually called on to clear away the obstruction and keep the story going.

One evening Whitman was an hour late, and on arriving explained that he had just come from the police station. He was walking quietly along F Street, he said, when a policeman grabbed him and charged him with being in disguise and wearing a mask. He was amazed and angry, but in the darkness he was sternly held as a dangerous lawbreaker and taken to the station. On close inspection the lieutenant on duty at once

released him, but the officer who had brought him in tried to explain: 'You looked so queer; your long white hair and whiskers, sir, and your eyes set well back, and your pink face looking as if it was painted. . . .' 'Well, well, never mind,' said the good-natured prisoner; 'we all of us wear masks!'

Another poet I saw while in Washington — thenceforth a pleasant remembrance. I got the first glimpse of him from the Press Gallery. He was standing in a corner of the Senate, leaning forward and patiently trying to pick a bit of the thread of current business from the bewildering tangle. Obviously he was a lion, for Sumner, Hamlin, Sprague, General Halleck, and other such advanced to greet him. It was Henry Wadsworth Longfellow — illustrious poet, linguist, and traveler. He was not tall; his dress was scrupulously neat; his hair was dark, with whiskers and moustache flowing together unmutilated. It would not have been surprising if they had been white as snow, for it was just after the awful accident in which his wife lost her life by fire. From a calm face he smiled welcome and good will on all, and maintained, through the formality of introduction and the running fire of conversation, an unflagging interest in the proceedings. Even from the gallery his identity was unmistakable.

The next day he called on Dr. Pierpont at the Treasury. As my desk was only ten or twelve feet farther off, I earnestly hoped and rather expected that Pierpont would do me the honor of introducing me; but they seemed to have a thousand Boston topics and people to discuss, and my great wish to meet our greatest poet was not gratified. Finally the visitor consulted his watch; whereupon they rose together and sauntered out — the Divine Comedy wafted to the door by the Airs of Palestine.

VII

I have never known so great a change to take place in any man's appearance as in Mr. Lincoln's during the three years following the day when I first saw him — March 4, 1861. He was never handsome, indeed, but he grew more and more cadaverous and ungainly month by month. The terrible labor which the war imposed prevented him from taking systematic exercise, and he became constantly more lean and sallow. He had a very dejected appearance, and ugly black rings appeared under his eyes. I well remember how weary and sad he looked at one of the inevitable receptions as he stood near the folding doors where the central corridor empties itself into the East Room.

As there was a pause for a moment in the stream of visitors, I heard a lady standing near him ask if the incessant handshaking was not even more fatiguing than his work up in the office.

'Oh, no — no,' he answered. 'Of course, this is tiresome physically; but I am pretty strong, and it rests me, after all, for here nobody is cross or exacting, and no man asks me for what I can't give him!' And he gave his hand to the next in line.

During the last two years of his life, he was constantly threatened with assassination. Of course no public notice was taken of the menaces, and he alluded to them only to protest against the military escort which he could not always escape. When Secretary Stanton or General Hitchcock warned him of danger, he said, 'Nobody can escape assassination by dodging. Moreover, if they kill me, the next man will be just as bad as I am! Under a republic no man can defend himself with a bodyguard. If I had a platoon with drawn sabres always at the door, they would

cry out that I was aiming to be emperor!'

He was always exposed to personal attack. There were at least two doorkeepers to pass before getting to his room, but they did not consider it necessary to be vigilant after office hours, and I often walked into the White House unchallenged and went straight up to the private secretary's room adjoining his own, without seeing any person whatever. And it was no uncommon thing for him to go alone out of the house at almost any hour of the day or night, and walk across the lawn to the War Department for a consultation or to seek some news.

During the search that succeeded his assassination it was ascertained that very complete arrangements had been made to kidnap him, and the gloomy cellar of the old Van Ness mansion down by the river had been prepared for his prison.

If not afraid on his own account, however, Lincoln certainly had some fear for his family's safety, and early in the war he sent them to Philadelphia out of harm's way. He was not only prudent, but he was somewhat superstitious, for one day he telegraphed: —

> Mrs. Lincoln, Phil.: Think you had better put Tod's pistol away. I had an ugly dream about him. A. Lincoln.

If Mr. Lincoln had weaknesses they were of an amiable sort that 'lean'd to Virtue's side' and excited a vast amount of sympathy, love, and grateful enthusiasm, which recruited the Union armies from the ranks of those who hated battle and were moved to enlist only by the highest purpose.

He never was quite as sad as he looked, and amid his heaviest responsibilities he generally decorated the situation with a story, an allegory, or a joke — though the latter were less broad than reported. And on occasion he was not without real vigor.

Of a committee that came to protest against making the South so angry that it would never reunite, he asked, 'Would you prosecute the contest in future with alder-stick squirts, filled with rose water?'

To a visit of Louisiana planters who complained of their great losses and besought him to get them back into the Union without further injury, he remarked, 'Broken eggs cannot be mended. Louisiana has nothing to do now but to take her place in the Union as it was, barring the already broken eggs.'

An acquaintance of mine asked Mr. Lincoln to appoint his son to the position of paymaster.

'How old is he?' the man was asked.

'He is twenty — well, nearly twenty-one,' said the applicant.

'Nearly twenty-one!' shouted Mr. Lincoln. 'I would n't appoint the angel Gabriel paymaster if he was n't twenty-one!'

Frank B. Carpenter, the artist, dropped into the Treasury Department one morning and invited John Pierpont, Ed Stedman, and myself to go over to the White House and see the portrait of Mr. Chase which he was just finishing in the great historical group on which he was engaged — 'Signing the Emancipation Proclamation.' The large canvas was propped up against the wall in the state banquet room. It was the opinion of a majority that Mr. Chase's unfinished portrait promised to be more lifelike than that of the President or any other of his Cabinet. Mr. Lincoln was the severest critic the artist had. He was not present on this occasion, but Mrs. Lincoln paused in passing through the room and said to John Pierpont, 'What puzzles me is what on earth we are ever going to do with it' — evidently having a

vague idea that it must somehow be got into the little wooden cottage they had left in Springfield, Illinois. Nobody could conjecture that Mrs. Elizabeth Thompson would come forward and pay $25,000 for it and give it to the country, so that it would find permanent place upon the walls of the Capitol.

In Washington during the war I was acquainted with an accomplished violinist named William Withers. I met him afterward and asked him to tell me the story of Booth and Lincoln, as I had heard that he was present on that dreadful night. 'Well,' he said, 'you know I was leader of the orchestra at Ford's Theatre. That night when Lincoln came in and took his seat in the proscenium box up at my right he acknowledged with great cordiality the cheers of the audience. He stood for a minute or two bowing. Every bow seemed to say, "Lee has surrendered!" and every cheer to answer, "You bet he has!"

'Laura Keene was on in *Our American Cousin*, and I had written a song for her to sing that night. When she left it out I was mad. We had no cue, and the music was thrown out of gear. So I hurried round on the stage on my left to see what it was done for. I was just giving the stage manager a piece of my mind when Spangler, the scene shifter, came forward to the gas box and took hold of the handle with which they turn the gas out. Knowing he had no business there, I pushed him away, and saying, "Get out of here! Go back to where you belong!" I closed the box and sat on the lid. I sat there a minute talking, then started down the stairs to my place.

'That minute I heard the pistol shot and ran back. Wilkes Booth was rushing madly across the stage toward me, brandishing a knife and shouting, "Out of the way!" He ran to the gas box, but was unable to turn out the gas for some reason, and jumped aside against me. He must have thought I struck him, for he made two savage passes at me with his knife, cutting me both times — once on the shoulder and once under the arm. I fell, and he sprang to the door and was gone. I was the first man arrested, and I told them the assassin was Wilkes Booth. I knew him intimately, and we had played billiards the very night before. I also knew Mr. Lincoln pretty well, for I had taught little Taddy how to play the drum, and he used to drum for the guards.'

BALLAD OF A CURIOUS ENCOUNTER

Over the hill in the birch and pine
I met an old, old friend of mine
With a crimson sash about his hips
And silent mocking on his lips.
Oh, it was good to find him there
With cold wind blowing in his hair
And laughter slanting in his eyes.
Oh, it was stranger than surprise!

We lay all day in the birch and pine
Watching the needles shake and shine,
Hearing the wind go sighing through
Till the shadows crowded thick and blue.
Then he kissed me thrice, and the first kiss tore
Like briars at the gown I wore;
The second slashed like knives somehow;
The third I can't remember now.

But since I met him, what do you think?
I face the sun and never wink.
I walk the woods from night till morn
And never flinch from a single thorn.
I don't know why, but I do know this:
Since that unremembered kiss
Thorns and knives are dull indeed.
I never falter, never bleed.

Rosalie Hickler

WILDCAT SETTLEMENT

BY ELEANOR RISLEY

I

In the false dawn, soft *madrugada* of the Spanish, we set out to Wildcat.

We walked softly under the clear song of the stars. For it is the morning stars that sing together. In lonely mountain camps we never hear the night stars sing. Perhaps our ears are dulled by the clamor of the day. They seem very far away, silent with the resignation of faith — or of despair. And now, the earth washed sweet by last night's rain, the wet leaves trembled with the nearness of dawn.

John, frantic with joy at the open road once more, disappeared in the shadows of the deep wood, and Sisyphus rattled happily over the rain-sharpened rocks.

'This constant breaking of home ties!' cried Peter. 'We grow attached at the slightest opportunity. Say we camp alone after this.'

'Oh, but that is being afraid of life, is n't it?'

'According to report, there are idiots and mudholes to be afraid of to-day. And the most sumptuous still in the mountains. The fellow who runs it is king of Wildcat Settlement. I left John's harness out for the mudholes.'

John knew it. He always knew. He would return when the way grew difficult and pull cheerfully as we urged Sis over some steep bank, or through deep mud where his four feet trotted lightly.

The dawn breeze died. The last star faded. And as the light suffused the dense wood that surrounded us we stopped on a hilltop overlooking the lush green plateau, watched with never-failing awe the sunrise, and lighted the little flame of our breakfast fire. Water for coffee by the roadside. For every despairing stream was chuckling now, and every drooping mountain flower was smiling with the recent rain.

This day we did not linger for accustomed cigarettes and conversation; for beyond, across the low, level stretch of Wildcat, slept Shady Cove, which we hoped to reach by sunset.

At the base of the mountain we slackened our pace and all three went into harness, for now each foot must be lifted with effort in the thick, sticky mud. Once, at a rushing stream with high banks, it took some time and some work to induce Sisyphus to cross on the two frail planks that bridged the swollen creek. And I, who can never walk steadily in high places, shuddered at the foaming depth below.

Noon — and we were at trouble to find a mound dry enough for a comfortable camp, hemmed in as we were by tall dark-shadowed woods of oak and gum and of sycamore and hickory, with fern and spongy moss beneath.

Immediately after a buffet lunch beside Sis we hastened on, although we were undeniably weary, and John so tired we set him free. But we were anxious to finish this journey across Wildcat, which abounded, we had been warned, with congenital idiots from intermarriage, with treacherous mudholes, and with lawless moonshiners.

We had seen several cabins set back

in the forest, but now that we were apparently near the centre of the plateau we came upon a rather pretentious log house, and near it a barn three times the size of the house. Something common enough elsewhere, but unusual in the mountains. We picked our way gingerly, the swamps on either side of the road recalling alligators to me and suggesting water moccasins to Peter and John. As we neared the place we could see that there was a corral of oak poles between the barn and the house. It must have been seven feet high, and there appeared to be something exciting taking place within. For on the top rail were perched a dozen men in a row, like so many outlandish birds with half-spread wings. They were squawking wildly: 'Now's yer time! Git 'er now! Look out, Lureely!'

John ran forward and stood transfixed, stiff-legged, staring between the poles of the fence. At this each bird turned his head like an owl and sent us an appraising glance of hostility. An owl hoot of 'Who-who' would have been more reassuring than this inimical silence. Unabashed, we climbed the fence and augmented the number of birds by two.

Inside the long corral, deep in the mire, at least twenty cows were plunging wildly about. A man with a coil of heavy rope stood in the middle of the enclosure trying, we could see, unsuccessfully to lasso one particular cow who had seen the hand of Fate, for she ran around the outside of the circle of cattle pawing and bellowing.

Time after time the man threw his rope, but the cow always evaded it and plunged about until the whole herd was milling. Deep in the mire a woman with great bare feet splashed about. She wore a long blue calico dress so plastered with mud that it flapped heavily about her tall, thin form. Her sunbonnet had fallen in the mud and her long graying hair whipped in the wind as she bounded around calling, 'Soo! Soo! Soo, Reddy!' She was carrying a heavy bucket and was endeavoring to place handfuls of salt on the backs of the frightened cows in the hope of quieting them when they stopped to lick the salt from each other's and their own backs. The foam from their licking lips filled the air like spindrift in an ocean storm, but they never ceased to mill. A tall bearded man in high-topped boots called continually: 'Lureely! Kim on outern thar! Lureely! Let thet-air fool man ketch ther consarned cow-brute! I don't keer effen he don't buy her! Kim outern thet, Lureely! Ye'll git trompled!'

It might be supposed that one of the dozen men who decorated the fence would have gone to the woman's assistance. But in the mountains a cow is peculiarly a woman's charge. The man buys and sells. But no mountain man would so demean himself as to feed or milk a cow; and I have seen cows frightened by the mere presence of a man.

Now there is the glory of a frenzied horse, and the grandeur of a maddened bull, but a cow, when she forgets her dignity and ceases to pose for her picture beneath a tree or knee-deep in quiet water, is undeniably an absurd creature. A matron, fashioned for contented repose in home surroundings; when she takes on speed her every move is some grotesque and lumbering antic. It was impossible not to laugh; but I cried to Peter: 'The poor woman! Why does n't Lureely come out? Why does n't someone go in and help her?'

'Why, yes,' said Peter. And to my consternation he dropped lightly from the fence, threw me his sombrero, dodged the racing cattle, and called to the man inside to throw him the rope. There was a high stump in the centre of the corral and Peter, mounting this, cried: 'I'll rope this cow for you! But

I want you to understand the moment I have roped her I'm over the fence and out! It's up to you then. You can snub her around this stump.'

No one spoke, and I called involuntarily: 'Lureely! Come on out!' But the misguided woman stood staring at Peter, who had spoken as one having authority; and the man brought the rope without a word.

'This is a cable, not a rope,' said Peter, 'but I'll try it.' And he stepped from the stump and carefully examined and coiled the rope.

My heart was in my mouth. What utter recklessness! This desperado mood of Peter's would draw down upon us contempt. Already there was hostility. And this, we knew, was the home of the great moonshiner — the king of Wildcat. And the danger! The cows were now tearing about in a way that defies description. And Peter, his black curls flying above his scarlet handkerchief, so very slender compared to these stalwart men of the mountains! I called to John, fearing he might rush to Peter's assistance and further enrage those terrible animals. But John did not answer. He was waving his white plumed tail in pride and expectancy. His god was adequate to any situation. Of course I knew that Peter had spent some time on a Western dude ranch, but he had never claimed proficiency in roping cattle. Now, astonishingly, unerringly, the heavy rope swirled through the air and dropped precisely over the head of the unfortunate cow in question. In a second Peter was laughing on the fence beside me.

Inside the corral it was no laughing matter. The man had seized the end of the rope and had snubbed it around the stump. But the rope was long and the lassoed cow began to race around the outside of the circle of milling cows, and the screaming woman, as well as the trampling herd, was pressed to the middle of the corral about the stump. Round and round the roped cow ran, gathering the woman and the plunging cattle into a clashing, bellowing mass. I shut my eyes, but opened them when a great shout went up. For the bearded man, seizing a rail from the fence, ran into the corral and laid about him valiantly. At last the poor cow fell, and Lureely, unexpectedly alive, limped away toward the house.

A man assisted the buyer with the cow, and the poor creature was dragged from the corral. As he passed us the buyer said: 'I'd give a hundred dollars effen I could rope a cow lak thet! Hit wuz a plumb surprisin' sight on yearth!'

Peter dismissed this praise with a wave of the hand, as if he roped a cow daily before breakfast. But, meeting my gaze of awe and pride, he said: 'Surprisin' to me, too. A long time since I twirled a rope. I wanted to help the old woman; and, by George, I nearly finished her.'

Said the buyer to the bearded man: 'Hed I knowed thet-air cow-brute would a sulled lak thet, I'd niver bought her. Effen ye iver fish my hat outern thet mud jest give hit to yer womern. She shore airned hit.'

Said the bearded man to the buyer: 'Hed I knowed whut kind o' a cowman ye air, I would n't a sold her. Effen I iver fish inything outern thet-air mud hit'll be my womern's toenails! Lak 'nuff she air crippled fur life.'

Delightedly we called the fascinated and reluctant John and pushed on. The bearded man seemed to be in conference with the men who had sat on the fence. Suddenly he called: —

'Hyar, ye-all! Stop! Ye feller thet roped ther cow — stop!'

We stopped.

'Whar ye aim ter go?'

We replied that we were aiming to go to Shady Cove.

'Got kin thar?'

'No.'

'Wal, I 'low ye cain't make hit ternight. Ye kim inter ther house an' stop by all night. In ther mornin' some o' ther boys'll show you-all ther short road ter Shady.'

The king of Wildcat spoke more in command than in invitation, more in menace than in hospitality. Our eyes met, and we turned and followed him into the house. For always we bore in mind the advice of friendly mountaineers. And when the owner of a still said turn, we turned. And, after all, we had wasted so much time that we knew we should never reach Shady Cove by sunset.

II

Inside the big bare room redolent of muscadine jelly in the making, Peter prevailed upon Lureely to remove the muddy rags from her lacerated feet and to apply antiseptic gauze and peroxide from our little medicine chest. She rewarded us by a sight of her marvelous quilts — her treasure — and by addressing Peter as 'Doc' and informing the household that he 'war a Doc.' There were three handsome young women, and one beautiful girl of eighteen perhaps, evidently 'lakin'.'

At an earlier supper than is common among farmers, eight men sat sullenly and silently with us, waited on by the women. When we had finished and were taking snuff — the wine and walnuts of a mountain dinner — one of the women lighted a lamp and showed us our room, destitute of furniture but for four beds, one in each corner.

'You-all,' she said, 'kin pick out whutiver baid ye want ter. The rest kin take whut's lift.'

We asked permission to bring Sisyphus in and to tie John to the wheel, and, selecting a bed near the only window that could be raised, sank gratefully into the feathers and awaited the others. Presently six men with rifles stalked in and, depositing their firearms beside their beds, blew out the lamp, and soon the heavy, liquor-laden air was filled with snores.

Peter whispered: 'Go to sleep. We're safer here than we should be in camp.'

'Of course,' I answered in a resigned whisper, 'though they probably mean to shoot us at sunrise.' And we slept sweetly until the sound of the breakfast horn awakened us. The six roommates were washing their faces at a trough and combing their hair with a small horn comb hanging by a long string to the porch wall. They were fine, fair, strapping young fellows, silent and sullen. From the bank behind the house by the lazy river the steam of the still rose gallant and unashamed.

At snuff time the king of Wildcat said curtly, 'Three o' ther boys is goin' yore way.' And they did — one preceding us with his rifle on his shoulder, and two following, also armed. We marched on until well past the road that leads from Shady Cove to the world. Then, telling us the road led straight from there to the Cove, they left us.

We passed several small cabins, often guarded by a moat and a drawbridge of planks. For there were standing pools of water everywhere, and the rising steam in the hot August sun made our walking a perpetual Turkish bath.

Before one of these log cabins we stopped on a slight elevation to catch the fitful breeze and to rest. A wild figure in a dress of coarse sacking came running down the path from the house, stopping to reach for a stone.

'Stop!' she screamed. 'Stop, you-all!' And a rock whizzed through the air, striking Sisyphus with such force that the scar remains to this day. Peter quickly pushed me down behind the cart, and, running to the woman, seized her hands.

'You know,' he said quietly, 'you must n't do that.'

'I wants my fortune telled,' croaked the woman. 'Ye air gypsies. I know 'bout gypsies. I wants my fortune telled!'

'We are not fortune tellers,' Peter replied, and released her hands. Instantly she hurled a rock at me where I had risen and was standing behind Sisyphus. 'Ye gotter tell my fortune! I wants my fortune telled!' And suddenly she began to cry. A pathetic, a terrifying creature. Incredibly emaciated, her head shaven. Her immense eyes, blazing like a light from out an empty skull, peered out as if all the life in her body had been sucked up by some alien tenant who gazed out with a wild curiosity at the world of men. Her hands, which could so well cast a stone, were great dirty claws. And her cracked voice was like the croak of some huge threatening bird. From her waist dangled a small rope that seemed to have been gnawed apart.

Peter, not daring to release her, called repeatedly, hoping to bring someone from the cabin or the field. But no answer came. Gently he tried to induce the woman to return to the house. But at this she began to fight and to scream. 'She's gotter tell my fortune! I hain't goin' back! I wants ter git erway frum Wildcat! I wants my fortune telled!'

'All right,' said Peter desperately, 'I'll tell your fortune.' The demented woman struck at his face with her long brown claw. 'I don't want no man ter tell my fortune! Hit's gypsy womern thet tells fortunes. They looks in yer hand. Tell my fortune, gypsy womern!' She sprang away from Peter and grasped my hand.

Heaven forgive me if the mere outward appearance of any human creature should bar me from fellowship in a mad world. But rather would I have faced the rifle of any moonshiner in Wildcat Settlement than have held the hand of this shell of a woman possessed of a devil. But Peter had reached for my free hand and was whispering, 'Try, if you can.'

So I swallowed hard and managed to say, 'Sit here on the fallen tree and be very quiet, and I will tell your fortune.'

Poor creature! Her fortune! Fortune! The very word filled my mouth with bitterness; signaled the curtain to rise on the farce of life. Each of us on his precarious island of security, cold with a secret fear of the awful acquiescence of the stars. Always the cruel persistence of our dreams amid sardonic laughter of whatever gods there be. Her fortune!

At last the piteous creature seated herself on the wet ground beside the fallen tree and commenced to simper in a silly, satisfied way.

'You are soon to go away from Wildcat,' I faltered. 'You will go where it is sweet, and cool, and pleasant always — and you will be happy.'

'Be whut?' whispered the woman.

'You will be young again, and you will run about as you used to do when your beautiful hair was brown and your cheeks like red roses. You remember a time like that. You will fly as free as a bird wherever you like. This day will only come back to you like the memory of a troubled dream. You will love everyone and everyone will love you.'

'Will I hev a pair o' gold yearrings? I allers wanted gold yearrings. Allers I craved 'em.'

And oh, the shabby dreams, the gewgaw ambitions that never die! 'Yes,' I answered firmly, 'if you still want them you will have them.'

The woman fixed her great eyes on the distant horizon of purple hills and spoke as if to herself. 'He allers said he'd git 'em fur me sometime. "Mammy," he'd say, "whin my leetle

calf grows up I'll sell hit an' buy ye some gold yearrings."'

Suddenly the skeleton figure rocked and wept. 'I don't want thim yearrings, gypsy womern! Hit hain't *thet* I wants ye ter tell. I wants him! Thet nice place whar I'm goin' ter, will he be thar? I wants ter hyar him sayin' whin I war plumb tired, "Mammy, I'll holp ye tote ther water frum ther spring in my leetle gourd." I wants ter hyar him! Hit air so still hyar in Wildcat! Folks dies by tharsilves hyar. Will he be thar too, gypsy womern, in thet nice place whar I'm a-goin'?'

The woman was quiet now and spoke with piteous expectant appeal. Peter turned away his face. For we both knew the sudden silence that comes over the world, never again in its entirety to be lifted. 'Tell her!' whispered Peter gently but relentlessly. 'Tell her.'

And with more assurance than I felt I answered: 'Yes, you will have that, too. The same voice; the sound of the little feet; and the small hand shut in your own.'

The woman looked up through happy tears.

Suddenly we seemed to have drawn all the latent forces of horror that lurk about us into an epitome of all human rebellion and despair. How paltry all our egoistic writhings in a tiny point of time — in a swinging universe! It was grotesque. A demented old woman, two obscure wanderers, and a dog with the ache of dumbness in his throat. The melancholy hills hemming us in here in this remote lost valley.

'Hyar, Miss Annie! Ye leave thim folks erlone, an' kim back ter the house!' called a woman who came running from around the cabin. 'She war worser ter-day, an' whin I wint ter ther field I hed ter tie her ter ther baidpost, fearin' she'd git ter ther branch. She allers makes fur ther water. She air outern her haid sence her boy died an' the water wuz too high fur a doctor ter kim. But hit would n't a done no good noways. He war bited by a moccasin snake. Kim on in now, Miss Annie,' said the woman kindly.

'Come on, poor gypsy woman,' said Peter. 'You've had an evil dream. We'll make camp to rest, and I'll brew you a fine cup of tea.'

Easier said than done. For on either side of the road was a swamp, and not until we had come to a wide shallow stream where a great, flat, sun-baked rock lay in the middle of the river was the problem of a camp solved. John, as he often did, suggested the solution. For at once he swam across to the dry island rock and, shaking himself frenziedly, stretched out to dry in the sun.

So we unlocked the cart, found our bathing suits, carried Sis across, and soon had a fire blazing on the rock from the débris we found there. It was a happy little river — the water crystal clear, and the banks bordered with laurel and shaded by willows. Presently we were smiling, a trifle wanly, over our adventures in Wildcat.

'There are those,' said Peter, 'who might consider Wildcat Settlement an unusual choice for a somewhat belated wedding journey.'

'But there's Shady Cove just ahead. And it is better than seasickness or a summer hotel where all is vanity and vexation of spirit.'

And, unusually weary, I lay back in the hot sunshine with John beside me, while Peter packed the cart after lunch. For even in this sweet spot we dared not linger to-day. Suddenly Peter whispered: 'Lie still. Don't move. There is a man with a rifle hid in the willows behind you.' Then, 'Hello, stranger! Come across and have a cup of tea with us.'

The man lowered his rifle and came through the laurel.

'I'm a-lookin' fur a wild hawg. Hain't seen none erbout, hev ye?'

'No,' said Peter. 'Going to shoot him?'

'Wal, I shoots wild hawgs and ither varmints some days. Most mistuck ye-all fur varmints in thim striped clothes.'

'Oh,' I said, 'these are our swimming clothes. Our others are in the cart. Had your dinner? We have eaten, but there's some left. Come across.'

'No, I hain't ben ter dinner; but I hain't no striped swimmin' clo'es, an' I don't 'low ter git wet. I got ther rheumatiz pow'ful bad.'

'I'll wade across and bring you a bucket of tea and a sandwich.' And Peter cut two huge slices of bread and two pieces of boiled ham.

The man ate and drank eagerly. 'Whar ye-all aimin' ter go?' he asked.

'Shady Cove,' answered Peter. 'We spent the night with Sanford.'

'Wal, hit hain't nothin' ter be proud of. Got kin in Shady?'

'No.'

'See Sanford's store?'

'No.'

'Hit's er big store. I 'low he's got duebills on ther hull settlemint. Nobody hain't got nothin' lift but iniquity in the *en*-tire settlemint.'

'Iniquity?' I queried.

'Yeah. He's got a mortgage on iverbody. I hain't got no iniquity lift now myself.'

One might suppose that the sudden confidences of the mountaineers are premature. But the customs of sophistication do not obtain in remote places. Reserved, silent, even sullen, when the mountain man condescends to speech with a stranger it is of vital, fundamental things.

'Much obleeged,' said the old man as Peter waded across for the cup and plate. 'Hit tasted pow'ful good. We air outern meat at our house. I war tryin' ter shoot a wild hawg. I air got ther rheumatiz so bad I cain't work murch. But I gotter new medicine thet holps some.' And he unfolded with pride a paper from his pocket.

'Hit air called Blessed Relief; an' ther *di*-rections says, "Rub on ther afflicted part in ther mornin' an' before goin' ter baid at night. Keep ther feet dry, an' eat sparin'ly o' meat." I follers thet last *di*-rection an' all ther family foller hit too, I 'lows. Thim *di*-rections is all right, only I hain't got no parts. I air all afflicted parts. Effen er man kin git his rheumatiz lo-*ca*ted he air placed so he kin work on hisself. Trouble is ter git hit lo-*ca*ted.'

To make amicable conversation while Peter packed the cart, I said: 'Did you ever try the sun cure? This sun-baked old rock has taken away all the pain in my back.'

'Hey?' said the old man. 'Mebby so.'

'But where,' said Peter, 'is that fine new pound of butter? It was unusually good butter. I spread the sandwiches with it only a moment ago. It is humanly impossible that it should have disappeared from this rock.'

'I 'low the dawg et hit,' suggested the old man.

But this I denied. John is an honest dog.

At last, pitying Peter's bewildered state, I arose lazily and assisted in the search.

'He, he, he!' laughed the man. 'I reckon I see thet pound o' butter. I 'low hit war not ther rock but ther grease thet holped yer rheumatiz! Hit air stickin' to ther afflicted part.' It was. I must have slid over on it when the man appeared and startled me.

The old man, still chuckling, shouldered his rifle and crept through the laurel. 'Effen you-all sees iny wild hawgs jist skeer 'em this-away, will ye? Hit's er long ways ter Shady. 'Low

ye'll be startin' on in yer clo'es. Apply ter ther afflicted part! He, he, he!'

'He is not hunting hawgs. He is a spy. If we ever get out of Wildcat I would n't cross it again even in an airship,' said Peter.

'Another escape. It is lucky for us he was hungry. Well, we shall soon be at the Cove. We'll hurry.'

III

Carrying Sisyphus across the river and changing to our clothes that looked less like 'striped varmints,' we trudged on through the mire. But where the river made a horseshoe bend there was a small bridge, and across it came a wagon drawn by mules. A man and a woman sat on the spring seat. The mules took fright before we could extricate Sis from the mud and climb the high bank, and the man was at trouble to hold them. The woman pushed back her sunbonnet and cursed us with astounding fluency and vigor. Never before in the mountains had we heard a profane word. Men in the mountains do not swear before their women.

'Ye ort ter be putt offen ther road, skeerin' folks an' takin' up ther road!' She turned her head to some louts leaning on the railing of the bridge and screamed: 'Whoop 'em, boys! Whoop 'em outern ther settlemint! The—' And here followed such a minute and vivid description of each of us, of John, and of Sis, that we were compelled to laugh; though I put John on his chain and took the rifle from Sis's slandered back and carried it across the bridge. One of the youths called, 'Whar'd ye steal thet dawg?' and threw a clod at John.

We felt we had had a narrow escape. And we did not release John or relax a certain vigilance for an hour. But now we realized with a kind of terror that, owing to our slow progress through the mud, we must make camp. We could not reach Shady Cove by dark. At last we found a mound that seemed high and dry above the swamps, and we set about at once collecting wood for a friendship fire as well as a cooking fire. For already the damp air was rising from the swamp and mosquitoes were singing.

Not until we had established ourselves comfortably did we miss John. I sounded the little whistle we carried, but no white form came bounding through the trees. We were not yet disturbed, for often John disappeared, bent on original research, and we would find him farther along waiting to welcome us. So we walked on, searched the woods, and, now thoroughly alarmed, called until it was so dark we feared to lose our way and fall into some treacherous bog. We built a great friendship fire, after our brave attempt at supper, and Peter piled wood near it for what he knew would be for me a sleepless night. Then he set the smudge fire across the door of the tent; and though he insisted that he share the watch with me, I refused the sacrifice. Presently he was asleep in the tent and I was sitting with my back against a tree, staring into the flames, and all about me the cold malice of the night.

Always I have envied Peter, Napoleon, and the entire Negro race their ability to advance determinedly into the ocean of sleep. For me, I must climb cliffs, descend tortuous paths, and then fall into slumber by mere accident.

We had exchanged few words as to John's fate. Our hearts were too sick. But we agreed to start back at daylight and search Wildcat Settlement until we found him if we spent the remainder of the summer there.

At intervals, above the mighty chorus of the frogs, I sounded the shrill

whistle. And always, as if it had been the signal for the curtain to rise at the theatre, the orchestra was suddenly hushed, and I could hear the whisper of leaves and the crackle of the fire. What a deafening chorus! So many frogs — were they to advance upon us they must bury us tent and all! I had n't thought there were so many frogs in the world.

There was a curious harmony in the pandemonium. As if the deep-embedded rocks, the roots of giant trees, the hollow caves inside the earth, gave tongue together in a horrid sanction to the eternal sovereignty of the powers of darkness. There was no mockery, no rebellion, in their shouting. Rather a solemn assent to the cruelty that lurks below the flowered surface of their world. Had John slept here with his head on my knee, we might have thought it funny — this wild chorus of mournful demons. For, listening through the long hours of the night, I came to distinguish certain voices. Boom! boom! boom! the mighty bass. A silence — then the lyric soprano trilling away, and waiting an instant for the barytone — then all the voices in triumphant unison.

And ever my mind ran in a vicious circle. He was trapped. He was calling us who had never failed him before. Our comrade! He was stolen. He was beaten. John, who had never heard a harsh word! Then I scorned myself for wasting such grief upon a dog. Why, there were children in the world that very night beaten, suffering, orphaned, alone. It was useless. My mind would go back to the days when he was a little white fluffy ball, so wildly proud in that hour when he could first jump as high as my couch where I lay ill. And the day when he staggered home, poisoned. And he lay under the chinaberry tree on the cool grass, and Peter said, 'Come away. We have done all we can. He is gone.' And I leaned down and said, 'Good-bye, little friend,' and he gave the slightest wag of his plumed tail, and I ran for the cup of hot coffee — and he lived!

They tell us we love dogs because they flatter our vanity — parasitical sycophants. John admired Peter extravagantly, but one could see that he considered me inferior in all that goes to make a man. And now the memory of those pleading eyes when sometimes I denied him a place in the car — a day that would have meant unalloyed bliss to him — only for the reason that he might cause me some slight inconvenience! We recognized that John was not as intelligent as some other dogs we knew. But who loves his friends for their intellectual superiority? John was honest, faithful, brave, and had a real appreciation of beauty.

How loud the frogs sing! Louder. Louder. An indistinguishable ringing in my ears. And day is breaking, and I lie in a crumpled heap by the ashes with a pillow under my head, and a blanket carefully tucked about me.

We made our coffee on the embers of the friendship fire and, hiding Sisyphus in a laurel thicket, set out on the back trail with heavy hearts. But Heaven sent us luck. Behind us trotted two sleek horses, with a wagon driven by a friendly man who asked us if we wanted a lift. We told him our story as we jolted along. He was from Shady Cove and was going 'outside for Granny who war over ter Jim Blake's.'

'No,' he said, 'yo'-all's dawg hain't trapped. Thar hain't no trappin' in Wildcat nohow. Nothin' but makin' pore liquor an' sellin' hit, an' raisin' houn' dawgs an' sellin' 'em. Wildcat sells iverthing an' lives as hard as heck. We-all don't neighbor 'ith Wildcat.'

'How,' asked Peter, 'did Wildcat get that way?'

'I kin ricollict back whin Wildcat

war as good er settlemint as thar war in these-hyar mountings. But whin Sanford got ter sellin' red-devil-lye liquor outside, iverbody got ter makin' hit an' sellin' hit too. Thin Sanford he buys 'em out er whoops 'em outern ther settlemint, an' they loses ther places, an' iverbody loses heart. Why, some o' 'em don't farm a-tall — don't raise nothin'. Effen ther womern did n't make gyarden they'd starve.'

'Here,' I cried, 'is the place where I saw John last! He ran east, chasing a rabbit.'

'Yo'-all jis' projict round,' said the man, 'an' ye'll find him tied up summers. Ther air some houses back thar up thet road to ther left. I'll be comin' erlong 'ith Granny this evenin' 'bout four o'clock. I'll pick ye up on ther road an' ride ye inter Shady. I air ther storekeeper thar, an' ther best campin' spot in ther Cove air jist ter one side o' my store. Git erlong, hosses!' And our only friend in Wildcat was gone.

'How do I "projict round"?' asked Peter. 'I don't know how to projict.'

'Neither do I. But I'll carry the rifle and you go ahead and projict.'

We came upon a desolate cabin set far back in trees.

'Now,' said Peter, 'I'll just go in and ask if they've seen our dog. I'm no diplomat.'

A grim woman with a locked face came to the door and asked us in. 'No,' she replied to Peter's question, 'hit's all we kin do ter take keer o' our own dawgs, 'thout keepin' track o' yourn.'

Peter, for a chance to look about, asked if he could get himself a fresh drink of water. The woman took the bucket and gourd and said she would go with him to the spring.

By the one window of the room sat an old woman in a clean calico dress. She was piecing a quilt of such a pretty and intricate pattern that I examined the work and told her how beautiful I thought it. She seemed pleased, and showed me all the pieces in her basket. As I followed Peter and the woman out of the door, the old woman coughed. There was something significant, portentous in that cough, and I looked back. She beckoned me. 'I'll wait here and rest,' I called to Peter.

'Now,' whispered the old woman, 'effen ye'll swar on a stack o' Bibles higher'n yore haid thet ye won't tell, I'll tell ye sumpen.'

I swore.

'Yistiddy evenin' thar war a white dawg runned past hyar — chasin' er varmint, I 'low. I hearn him barkin' over to Al Grier's house nixt ourn. Thin I heerd a dawg howl lak he war ketched an' drug. Minnie, hyar, war outen ther gyarden patch. She musta knowed hit too, but she don't 'low ter hev no trouble 'ith thim Griers. They is low-down folks. I 'low you-all's dawg is shet up thar this holy minute.'

'But oh, how can we get him? There are no officers of the law in Wildcat, I suppose. They may not give him up to us.'

'Lawsy, no! They aims ter sell him outside. But I 'low ye hes a chancet ter git him effen ye is slick enough. Al Grier an' his biggest boy rid by goin' ter Sanford's airly this mornin'. I hain't seen 'em kim back. They did n't hev ther dawg, fur I watched 'em. Solly air lakin', but he air plumb stout an' kin fight, though they don't give him no gun. Mostly he air sleepin' under a tree whin his pappy air away. Don't let on whin yer man kims 'ith the water. Minnie air my son's womern.'

I took from my pocket an envelope containing two bright little handkerchiefs and gave them to the dear old woman.

'Lawsy,' she cried, 'thim air too leetle to do no good fur hankerchers!

I'll jis' snip 'em up fur quilt pieces 'fore Minnie gits 'em.' And she snipped them with her great shears and hid them in her basket.

Catching Peter's eye as he gave me a gourd of water, I nodded significantly. We thanked the sullen Minnie and the gallant old woman and went down the grassy road that led to Grier's.

'What luck!' cried Peter excitedly. 'I'll go on and climb the side fence. Give me the rifle. Wait here till I signal you to come. We'd best be together. But don't call or whistle if you hear John howl.'

Peter disappeared around the cabin, and in a minute that seemed an hour he waved to me, and I climbed the rail fence and joined him at a ruined barn behind the house.

'My word, but he's a whale — that Solomon! He's asleep on the grass at the east side of the house. John is not inside. I looked in.' Neither was he in the barn. Oh, could they have sold him outside already — taken him where we could never find him? Peter went to look in a henhouse and I turned to a small shed with the upper half of a locked door open. I found a piece of plank and climbed up to look inside. There lay John, exhausted, his weary head between his paws, tied by a thick rope to some implement. I crept away and brought Peter, then climbed through the upper door, leaving Peter on guard with the rifle. I put my hand over John's mouth and his excited barks changed to sneezes. But he jumped about so wildly that I could not untie the rope and had to get Peter's knife to cut it — horribly frightened at the delay.

At last John vaulted through the door and whined with his head on Peter's shoulder. I found a keg and climbed out. We put the chain on John and ran for the fence, Peter and John in the lead. But my skirt caught on the fence and I could not tear it loose. A gigantic, shambling figure came from behind the cabin and sniffed the air like some huge wild beast. I screamed to Peter, brought the top rail down with me, but freed my skirt, and ran for my life. Forsaking the road, we plunged into the deep woods. As we cautiously emerged again into the open road, there, driving down the road from the north, came two men in a wagon. The Griers! Laughing hysterically, we all three took to the woods again until we were almost at the thicket where Sisyphus waited. We pushed on at once and it was long past noon when we stopped for lunch. But oh, the delight of that dinner of herbs together!

At last came the rattle of a wagon and our friend from Shady called: 'Got him! Git in. Best putt him in too so thar won't be no chancet fur a ruckus. Granny likes dawgs.'

How happily we jolted along on the board set across the wagon for a seat! How gratefully we clutched the little bumping, interfering form!

'Where is that place called Wildcat?' grinned Peter. The man turned alarmed eyes, and I hastened to say, 'He means we have forgotten our troubles at Wildcat.' And, indeed, how faint already was the memory of the king of Wildcat and his patient wife with the lacerated feet; the demented woman who had opened Dantean gates for me; the rheumatic spy who hunted wild hogs; the stealer of dogs. A little new happiness — at best but an escape from sorrow — had, like a ray of sunshine, chased away the demon-peopled dark. And all because a little creature who cannot speak, and some tell us cannot reason, was with us again.

Peter, waving his hat, stood upon the insecure seat and chanted wildly: 'Farewell, Wildcat! "And if forever, still forever fare thee well."'

GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSITION

BY H. D. HILL

THE difficulty of distinguishing between the major American parties on any other basis than that of the 'ins' and the 'outs' has become proverbial. The absence of a recognized political opposition is inevitable in America so long as we retain our present governmental structure. The system of checks and balances was put into the Constitution because its makers were looking backward toward absolutism, not forward toward impotence; it was impossible for them to know that the early democratic measures taken against autocracy in kings might paralyze all governmental action and in the end bring back autocracy in the form of dictators.

At the time when the founding fathers were writing, the legislative estates of the realm collaborated in a system which reached its apex in a powerful king. In England the germ of the new order was growing, but it was difficult to see the prime minister of the future in the foremost minister of His Majesty; the sovereign was still the king, not the people. The Whigs and Tories were yet vacillating between being parties and being factions; and the principle of ostracism of the party out of favor was whole-heartedly enforced. Party government was therefore in its infancy, and an opposition in the modern parliamentary sense unknown. And by an unfortunate accident Montesquieu had just looked at the English government with a too intellectual eye, and schematized its structure with an inaccurate precision that attracted the constitution-making American lawyers. The model of political structure which the Constitutional Convention made was therefore balanced and symmetrical enough to conform to every requirement of the classical revival, but, unfortunately, too rigid to permit the subsequent development of a technique of responsible party government.

As a result of our ancestors' choice, the elements which would normally make up a party government are, in our system, separated from each other by the thin steel walls of constitutional requirements. Messages are indeed conveyed from one compartment to another by means of tapping, but more or less surreptitiously. The President and his Cabinet are on one side of a wall; the House and Senate and their Committees on the other. Constitutionally these party elements may not become cohesive; no wonder, therefore, that they are incoherent. Each is separate from the other, and each has the impunity of fixed tenure.

Responsibility on the part of the legislative is lightened because the execution of the laws it declares is somebody else's affair. Responsibility on the part of the executive is lightened because its initiative is strictly limited; in most cases it must accept what is passed on to it to execute. Responsibility on the part of both is lightened because accountability for what they do may be as much as four years off. The sensitivity of a cabinet which may be brought down to-morrow because of

errors in either legislation or execution is wholly absent. And the impunity provided by the once-in-four-years rule is, so far as specific issues are concerned, a permanent impunity. Since governments are not put out for a specific issue, a favorable vote is at best a mandate for a multitude of measures — it is more likely due to a desire to 'keep the outs out,' to foster 'continued prosperity,' or to some other such general urge.

The lack of coördination and of clear-cut party purpose shows most plainly in the realm of foreign affairs. The President and the Department of State are under no obligation to discover what support they can obtain for their acts before acting; the Senate, in reviewing the agreements they make, is under no obligation to consider the position of the Secretary of State with regard to further foreign relations after the Senate's decision. During colonial times the fact that the executive was appointed in England and the legislative chosen by the colonists created a tradition of hostility and irrelevant utterance by the latter in regard to the acts of the former. This tradition survived the break with England, to be directed against our own State Department. And whereas in the colonial situation the executive received his support from a higher authority, which left the resolutions of the legislative without effect, and the system continued to work, the present executive depends on legislative ratification, so that sabotage and stalemate become not only practicable but practised. We disregarded this possibility in the days of our isolation because foreign relations were normally few, and we approved of their being kept at a minimum; now that foreign relations are increasingly numerous we are still trying to handle them with the old technique.

Our party organization reflects the looseness of our governmental structure. We have no parties in the sense of cohesive and coherent bodies of men coöperating in the accomplishment of a chosen series of policies. The irrelevance of everything except logrolling has divided the figures of our political life into the academic and the self-seeking (as the boss understands the word 'self'). We have no leaders. We have candidates, chairmen, committeemen, favorite sons, and bosses, but we do not have leaders. Occasionally a 'nation-wide figure' appears, but he is hastily transformed into a candidate by the rest. And, once a successful candidate, his active influence is confined to the compartment into which he has been voted. We have no unsuccessful candidates. The 'man who did n't get in' fades back into private life. Likewise the 'man who has had two terms.' The system has no place for them. We are utterly wasteful of political brains. The presidential candidate who fails of election, instead of becoming the leader of the opposition, looks for suitable private occupation. The man who has had the experience of the office of chief executive passes quietly from the political scene. Responsible party government — where the executive is a committee of the legislature, where each measure as it appears, and the manner of execution of each measure as it takes place, are debated singly and on their merits on the floor of the house — is unknown to us. The only time we have a coherent party, either as the government or as the opposition, is for a brief moment prior to elections once in four years, and at that time anything in the nature of genuine discussion is drowned by the 'ballyhoo' of the brass band.

Our present governmental technique thus prevents us from ever having a genuine political discussion, carried on

by fully responsible persons whose tenure depends on their ability to make good their case and, therefore, gives it reality. The Speaker of our House rules, but does not govern, and even his rulings are only locally applicable. We provide no opportunity for the development of coherent alternative policies, followed through over long periods, tempered by continual debate with other equally coherent policies, and rendering alternate periods of national service as the government and as the opposition.

The compartmentalizing of the means of government has prevented the development of general philosophical points of view on the treatment of public affairs. We have no body that incorporates the Conservative way of looking at things, or the Liberal way, or the Labor way (for our various left-wing 'ists' are mere formularians, puritanically conning their texts). We take our public life in morsels; we never have an opportunity to get a broad view of different possible standpoints. Segregated on the islands of this jurisdiction and tenure, the elements of public life are disjoined; the manner of their present arrangement prevents them from ever coming to grips with the fundamentals of political reality.

In the economic world, questions of practice, problems of how best to organize the elements at our disposal, interest us intensely, and we have never hesitated to replace a machine that at the time of its invention was indeed remarkable by a model which proved better in the light of later experience and events. But we have not yet come to this point of view with regard to the machinery of government.

THE LAST OF THE SQUIRES

BY RALPH ADAMS CRAM

I

As I look backward over long years it seems to me that almost my earliest recollection is of the 'Old Place,' as it was always called, and of its very personification in its master the Squire, my mother's father, Ira Blake of Kensington. At an age perhaps of four or five years, I seem to have had a sort of dim apprehension of the fact that here in this unity of place and character there was something that set itself apart from the life that was shaping itself around me, something that was even then a rare survival out of an older time, and was even then, as a matter of fact, about to disappear forever. Recovering now something of the memory of those old days, and of the reality that was so stimulating to a young mind, and creative, or at least formative, I know that this was a true instinct and that my grandfather was in a sense the last of the squires.

In this he represented more than a social episode, for the squirarchy of England, and of New England, was the last phase of that feudalism that came into existence as a social necessity after the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, with the resulting political and

social chaos, and was the social basis of mediæval civilization for a thousand years. And this system with its vitality of human, personal relationship, which had persisted here and there in scattered enclaves, chiefly of English speech, was coming to an end, — had come to an end, as a matter of fact, — giving place to something altogether new, and Squire Blake was perhaps the last representative of an old régime in what his fathers had known as a new land.

It was not altogether a handsome place, this ancient homestead, for it antedated the eighteenth-century mansions of the maturer culture that came of hard-won stability and a measure of wealth. The land had come into family holding early in the reign of King Charles II, and the older part of the house had been built under William and Mary. The estate included many acres of rolling country in what was then the town of Hampton (Kensington was set apart many years later), with some fine old trees, while the house was a standard New Hampshire type of the late seventeenth century, very square and broad, of two stories, with the gigantic central chimney stack, the narrow winding stairway, the great 'east room,' the long kitchen and its huge fireplace and brick oven. Later another section was added to the west and still later a long wing to the north, for it was our custom in New Hampshire to divide the homestead into two independent parts so that the old folk might have one section, the eldest son the other, as soon as he took to himself a wife.

During two centuries endless subsidiary structures had multiplied themselves in every direction; barns and stables of enormous size and in prodigal number, smokehouses and dairies, carriage houses and workshops, and quarters for spinning and carding and weaving both wool and flax. The chief loom was in the attic of the main house, a place to us, as children, of wonder and mystery and not a little awe. The old shops were even more beguiling, full as they were of the plunder of generations. One in particular I hold in kindest remembrance. It was gambrel-roofed and stood this side of the slaves' burying ground (the Squires of Kensington were slaveholders down to the Revolution), and was a mine of wealth. Here were old muskets and decrepit military equipment from three wars, flax wheels and snowshoes and dismembered clocks, old sweet-smelling honeycombs, bundles of herbs hanging from hewn rafters, mouldy calf-bound books, cocked hats, little leather trunks full of musty papers, rusty tools of all sorts, moulds for casting bullets and running candles, spring traps, foot stoves, punched lanthorns — in fact such treasure as bulked larger in youthful eyes than the hoarded gold of Spanish galleons.

And the house itself was no less enchanting. It was all so different; its atmosphere was so distinct, so stimulating. I was born in a house my paternal grandfather had built, and it was hardly forty years old when I saw the light. It had no history; love and life and death had had no time to breathe into it the soul that makes old houses living entities. The Blake Place was different; it already had two centuries behind it, and even to a child this was subtly manifest. The east room was typical: very large, with a ceiling so low a grown man could put the flat of his hand on the under side of the huge central beam that spanned the room from north to south; the windows with their tiny panes, the solemn tall-clock in one corner and in another the cupboard with its old china and pewter and its cut-glass decanters of metheglin; the curly-maple desk with its secret

drawers, the old queen's arm and the sword with the ivory hilt and the silver lion's head; the 'drawn-in' rugs, and the chairs and tables of curious contours. And the long kitchen was no less engaging, for here was the fireplace, so large that I was told my mother and her sister used in winter to sit within it on either side of a fire of cordwood and look up the great throat and see the stars. One room above I particularly remember — a long and narrow room looking to the west and directly into a vast horse-chestnut tree that in summer filled it with green light. There were great chests along the walls, and not much else in the way of furnishing. There was some mystery about that room, — of this I was sure, — but what it was I never found out. Its atmosphere was curiously mingled of delight and terror; therefore it was delectable.

II

Such was the Squire's environment, and he himself was its excellent presentment. Without being extremely tall, he was of very commanding presence. Smooth-shaven, rubicund, with great masses of waving snow-white hair, he looked, with his strongly modeled head, like a handsome version of Henry Clay. To me he was rather terrifying and I suspect he was so to everyone else, including his family. To them he was also the 'Squire' and was never referred to in any other terms. I still remember what seemed to me his supercondescension when once he showed me his surveying instruments and told me of their use. As the recognized head of the community by right of succession, it was for him to survey lands when this was necessary, to draw wills and prepare all legal papers. As of right he represented his town in the legislature at Concord, but beyond this his function was far-reaching, for he was the court of last resort in family feuds and domestic difficulties, and to him his townsmen went in all kinds of trouble.

I do not think he ever assumed the status arrogated by my great-grandfather on my father's side, who claimed such precedence that on the Sabbath day no one could go to meeting until the 'Leftennant' had been seen riding down the road on his big white horse, when the waiting faithful were at liberty to fall in meekly behind. Toward the end of his life one sprightly old dame revolted against this enforced subjection, and when Leftennant Jonathan entered the meetinghouse there she was sitting in solitary and aggressive state. It is said that the old gentleman gave one look of outraged dignity, turned on his heel, and went home to take to his bed, from which he never rose again. No, I think Squire Blake ruled and influenced his community without assertion of place and privilege, but rather through personal character and acceptable tradition, and that really he was not as stern and awful as he seemed to be.

Politically he was, of course, a Federalist, though by his time the party name had changed. His admiration for the Adamses knew no bounds, in testimony of which he named his eldest son John Adams. He had scant liking for innovations of any kind, whether political, social, or economic. Down to my own day everything was done at Old Place exactly as it had been since the time of William and Mary. I cannot now recall a single new thing in the ménage. Since my great-grandfather's time the growing of flax with the sequent processes of carding, spinning, and weaving had been given up, and the spinning and weaving of cotton and wool fabrics, a necessary defection which must have weighed heavily on the Squire's soul, but still

rugs were braided, both of rags and of corn husks, while most marvelous carpets were drawn in by the women of the household and their neighbors. This was a most social and festive process. In the east room the frame and canvas were set up, and here some half-dozen dames assembled to work day after day at some masterpiece of design and color. The more original the pattern, the better, and on one occasion on a gray November day I was dispatched with a cousin to find brown oak leaves to use as a model. Even now I remember that sumptuous carpet with admiration. In a shadowy, far-off sort of way it seems to allocate itself in my mind with those wondrous tapestries the ladies of some ancient castle used to weave in its dim curtilage. The impulse and the method were perhaps the same, but how different, artistically, the result.

III

So far as I know nothing in the way of food supplies was ever purchased, except perhaps condiments and such alien products as could not be provided in those latitudes. Wheat for flour was grown on the place and sent to Exeter to be milled, and all other grains as well, including oats and buckwheat. Beef, mutton, ham, and fowls the farm provided, and the smokehouse was a fundamental institution. No such ham and bacon and sausage (the latter put up in cloth bags four inches in diameter) ever came out of Chicago, as I very well know! Honey was a staple product. Out by the old slaves' burying ground was the long row of hives, and golden honeycombs appeared for every breakfast. Moreover, it was from the comb after the liquid honey had dripped away that the metheglin was made. I doubt if there was any place in the world where this seductive beverage was made later than here. You read of it in Chaucer and in pretty much all Middle English literature, but though I remember it in Kensington as late as 1878, I have found no trace of it in England, Scotland, Wales, or the southern American states. It was never made after my grandfather died, for with him the secret was buried, but its fragrant memory lingers with one individual at least, and the thrill that came when as a special favor the decanter was taken down from the corner cupboard and the small wineglass given into the receptive hand. As I recall this metheglin, it looked and tasted like a rather full-bodied sherry, but with an added flavor and bouquet of honeycomb.

The process of making was somewhat mysterious and it is unfortunate that the secret is probably lost, for metheglin would have been a very valuable and lawful addition to the list of stimulating beverages now supposed to be so limited. I only know that the combs of fresh honey were placed in coarse linen bags and hung from a beam to drip their nectar into an earthen crock. After the flow stopped, the combs and what remained of the honey were put into a great copper kettle together with a certain amount of water, and hung over the fire, there to simmer for several days. As the wax rose it was skimmed off for candles (the expensive little paraffin lamps or kerosene, then just in vogue, were not for the Squire), while the honey and water were boiled down to a certain point and then the result was subjected to the two processes of fermentation. I dare say a little experimenting would result in the restoration of a lost but noble art.

Apropos of the bees, it is known that they have little liking for a house of unhappiness and are also sensitive to

slights or unfriendliness. Always, therefore, they were 'told' the moment there was a death in the family — that is to say, strips of black cloth were draped along the fronts of the hives. Where this is done promptly and properly the bees will stay, and so they stayed when the Squire died, for they were considerately told. Some years later at the death of my grandmother, my uncle, who was more of a modern in his sympathies, disregarded this precaution, and every bee left the place. I am sure my grandmother would have wished otherwise. She was a very wonderful old lady, — a Sanborn, with all that means of intense individuality, — with piercing black eyes and black eyebrows. She had a great fund of old English folk songs and would sing them to us children with immense gusto. There was a mild version of the 'Derby Ram' and another that, for the first two verses, ran as follows: —

Oh, I have a master and I am his man
(Galloping dreary on),
Oh, I have a master and I am his man,
I'll marry a wife as soon as I can
With my haley-galey, gamborary,
Higgledy-piggledy galloping, galloping,
Galloping dreary on.

I met with a friar and asked him the way
(Galloping dreary on),
I met with a friar and asked him the way;
'By jinks!' said the friar, 'you've both gone astray!'
With your haley-galey, gamborary,
Higgledy-piggledy galloping, galloping,
Galloping dreary on.

Years afterward I found a completely distorted and corrupt version of the first verse in a nonsense anthology by Carolyn Wells where it had place as a meaningless jumble of words — which it was not, but a song that had come over from England with the first Colonists and that dates back, I suppose, to pre-Reformation times.

IV

It was the annual Thanksgiving Day that fixed the reality of the Old Place and the Squire in youthful minds with indelible alchemy. Whenever my father was home from his pastoral charges at this season, we, with all the others of both families, forgathered under the patriarchal roof for this greatest of New England feasts. There was the long anticipation; the three-mile ride, if the winter came early, in the box sleigh, well wrapped in buffalo skins and to the clash of bells, up over the hills to Kensington. Tables were put end to end in the east room, covered with linen woven many years before, and loaded after a fashion that was paralleled only by some of the scandalously unrestrained menus recorded of the Middle Ages. There was nothing on the table the farm had not produced except pepper, salt, and sugar, but there was everything from turkey, duck, and chicken to (of necessity!) three kinds of pie, mince, pumpkin, and apple, while cider and metheglin were the accepted — and acceptable — drinks.

At the head of the table sat the Squire, his highly colored face with its crown of tumbled white hair rising magnificently from his high old-fashioned stock. Around him were his sons and daughters, sons- and daughters-in-law, and grandchildren — twelve or fourteen in all, no more, for his was never a prolific line; but all were there, for none died before him. Now the name is extinct, since neither of his sons had issue, and after almost three hundred years there are no more Blakes in Kensington and strangers hold the lands and the ancient house.

For some reason the memory of breakfast at the Old Place holds more firmly than that of the great festivals. The waking in the early light with dim

sounds from the poultry yards and farm, the smell of bacon from the kitchen below mingling with that of lavender and old linen. The long kitchen with its vast fireplace and the table between the windows with its 'sprig china,' thin old silver, and the curved knives and two-tined forks with their buck-horn handles. Probably the food was better than anywhere else; it certainly seemed so, for the ham and bacon were cured over smouldering corncobs; the cheese — made, of course, on the place — was as good as Stilton, though milder; the honeycomb crunched lusciously between the teeth. The 'rye drop-cakes' and the cream toast made from these now forgotten delicacies take, however, first place. These affairs were baked in the brick oven on a layer of corn meal, and were unquestionably food paramount, especially when they were served toasted with a sort of butter sauce. I do not remember that the New England tradition of pie for breakfast was adhered to, but it would in any case have been an act of supererogation.

It was all a lingering episode out of the eighteenth century with no single intrusion of the then fast developing factors of the imminent social and economic revolution that has brought in a new world. I am thankful indeed that I have known it and been a part of it; have swung my scythe in the echelon of mowers pacing in the dew at dawn around the field; have taken my place on the staddle in the salt marsh to dispose the forkfuls of salt grass thrown up to me, so fashioning one of the great pyramidal haystacks, and, when all was finished and the sedge ropes lifted and fixed over the bounding top of the resilient stack, sliding down headfirst by means of one of the long poles used for 'poling in' the marsh hay.

It was a life of singular peace, serene, wholesome, and strong, as I saw it from time to time during school holidays; and in the Squire, what he was, did, and stood for, there was something of that normal life of human society that took its form, I dare say, among the Minoans and the Egyptians of the Old Kingdom and in Ur of the Chaldees. Cnossus, Athens, and Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople, Paris, Berlin, New York, create from time to time a vivid, violent, and predatory seeming of supremacy that submerges the old institutions under the turbulent flood of great achievement. Then each passes; the earth receives the shards of the temples and palaces and strongholds as it once had yielded them building stones. The glory of a sudden greatness perishes and is forgotten, and after 'the tumult and the shouting' of victory and defeat have died away, the old life of human relationships and human scale emerges once more and establishes another period of dominance.

I dare say that in process of time even a technological civilization may pass, and the old life come back when Wall Streets and Woolworth Towers and Leagues of Nations have become one with Tyre and with Babylon. For the moment, however, Squire Blake and the life he embodied have become no more than a memory.

A LEAVE-TAKING

As I went down through Eskdale
  In a sudden shower of rain
I heard my heart within me say:
  You may not come again.

The pack-straps on your shoulder
  They bear a heavy load;
They carry boyhood's dead delight
  Along the outward road.

Scawfell is set behind you
  And Bowfell stands to keep
The memories of racing blood
  Where the wind's among the sheep.

On Crinkle Crags the black rain
  Is yours no more to love
And Border End stands yearlong now
  The grave of youth above.

Then, if I go forever
  From Cumberland the kind,
O last-met winds, breathe into me
  A clean breath for my mind:

O rain across the tarn's face,
  Brown sunlight on the slope,
Give the last gift of courage now
  To exile's heart of hope.

OWEN LATTIMORE

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FRENCH POLITICS

BY ANDRÉ SIEGFRIED

I

In French political life certain qualities seem to be permanent, such as the individualism originally inherited from the Gauls, which is now innate in our character.

Instead of organized parties on the English model, we have political groups that are as uncertain and changeable as clouds, and with no real discipline. The individualism of France is negative in comparison with the constructive individualism of the Anglo-Saxon Protestants; in fact, the two schools of thought are so definitely opposed that one needs entirely different sets of words to express the two ideas. Our political combinations are unstable, but their tendencies are remarkably fixed, for even after fifty years we often find the same political tenets adhered to in some districts. They still, although the party labels may have changed, represent the solid foundation of our political history.

Another thing that we are apt to overlook is that we are satisfied with our own mode of life; so contented, in fact, that we cannot picture any other. The social structure built on this foundation is possibly the most solid basis of the nation, for the daily routine of the French people is ingrained in their very being — the wine at every meal, the black coffee after lunch, the little garden tended so lovingly, and the modest café where they chat and play cards with their friends. Watch a mason in the South lunching under the trees at noon, or a French gendarme lingering over his coffee, and you will agree that there is something in our atmosphere which you can neither replace nor carry away with you. Danton spoke truly when he said that we could not take our native soil away on the soles of our shoes. France means to us a way of living on which we are all so entirely agreed that scores of things are taken for granted, no matter to what political party we belong. In this sense one might say that the most progressive are really the most conservative.

Our discussions on practical matters are thus anything but sensational, and although they may be ably, even brilliantly presented, they interest only the specialist, so the game as a political game is hardly worth the candle. In France a policy of interests rarely pays, for, as Albert Thibaudet remarks, 'our political life is autonomous, and it is not a supplement to economics. . . . If a party puts "Interests" on its banner, absolutely nothing doing!'

On the other hand we get quite worked up when we discuss persons and personalities, and the position of the individual in the community — especially if theory enters in! Even such a simple matter as our own personal theory on the point entails endless debates and floods of eloquence. Principles and ideals are the heart and soul of our politics, but their eventual application often remains a matter of quasi indifference. That subtle con-

noisseur, Robert de Jouvenel, rightly observes, 'Our legislators are far less interested in the contents of the bills before them than in the resolution closing the debate.' This explains the carefully prepared speeches to establish the exclusive claim to some great man long since dead and gone, or to some glorious national heroes over whom, anywhere else, there would be no dispute whatever. If we are not quite sure what group Vercingetorix would now back, at least we do know that the Church claims Joan of Arc as belonging politically to her, and so the posters in the windows on her saint's day give us an exact map of clericalism and anti-clericalism in Paris.

The municipal disputes over the names of streets are even more amusing. Such excitement when it comes to voting for the title to be posted up on the walls, whether it is to be Boulevard du Maréchal Foch, Place Anatole France, or Rue Ferrer! The animated discussions which arise in this respect really amount to opposing various conceptions of life, politics, and man to each other, and they disclose within those militants full of 'sound and fury' a fine imaginative power. In the end they go off peaceably to a café, and probably nothing is changed.

Party divisions — political tendencies, if you prefer the term — are based on opposing conceptions of life, and the instinctive personal reaction of like or dislike felt toward a certain social order. During the past century we have had two main lines of cleavage: first, the French Revolution and whether or not we accept it and its consequences, in which case the contest is for or against the *ancien régime;* secondly, the intrusion of capitalistic production into the social system born of the eighteenth century, in which case liberty and individualism, the moving forces of yesterday, defend themselves against collectivism, the invading force of to-day. The Revolution was still the outstanding issue up to 1848, but later, and especially at the end of the nineteenth century, the question of capitalistic domination became entangled with it, without, however, supplanting it. Thus we must consider the parties according to whether they are based on the Revolution or upon the industrial problems that are steadily increasing in importance.

II

Even to-day, a hundred and forty years after the Declaration of the Rights of Man, the French Revolution has not yet been accepted by everybody. Do we, or do we not, agree with the spirit of 1789? That is the point. It is not a question of the republic versus royalty; the issue lies much deeper. 'You are rallied around the republic,' said Léon Bourgeois to certain Orléanistes on the morrow of the Boulangist imbroglio. 'That means nothing. Do you accept the Revolution?' The line of demarcation is not where we expect it to be, for except among the masses the number of devotees to the Revolution is surprisingly small.

Underlying the spirit of 1789 is the conviction that sovereignty is vested in the people; that is to say, we are ruled from below, not from above. This presupposes equality of citizenship, at least in theory; but it does not mean Communism, for we wish to keep our personal independence, nor yet real equality, for we are too practical for that. In the last analysis it is the confirmation, jealous and unyielding, of the theory of the dignity of the individual, a theory in which one still feels the passionate eloquence of Rousseau.

We find the same idea to-day when

Alain makes his villager say, 'The rich may use the highroad for their automobiles as much as they like, but don't let them try to tell me that they are any better than I am! . . . If we must have inequality, I should like to hear some good loud shouting for equality at the same time.' Thus it is the working classes — that is, universal suffrage — that must inspire the politics of the nation. Yet if we admit this hackneyed phrase we get ourselves involved, for we implicitly deny either government by the social authorities (I mean the traditional ruling classes) or the right of the Church to intervene in the affairs of the State. Resisting the claims of the adversaries of the Revolution thus amounts to assigning limits to the domain of the Revolution.

The social authorities to whom our theorists refer are certainly not recognized as such by the masses. Although they may not admit it openly, they would consider that they are entitled to govern the country politically as well as socially by divine right of wealth and birth. In the old days we were ruled by the king, the nobility, and the bishops; to-day it would be by the great landed proprietors, and captains of industry, the high officials of the State, organized capital, and the salons.

When M. Thibaudet describes the rivalry between the well-off student and the poor scholar — Barrès as opposed to Lagneau or Burdeau — it is a case of the classes versus the masses. The former, however, do not understand the spirit of 1789. Wealth and birth have always been candidates for the government of mankind, and if occasionally they admit that their power has only been delegated to them they must not be taken too seriously, for at heart they believe that they rule by divine right. Some instinct out of the distant past always prompts them to bring the lower classes under their tutelage. 'I doubt if a salon exists,' says Alain, 'where the hostess accepts the sovereignty of the people without question.' This is an actual fact.

In the case of the Church the quarrel is more complex, since doctrine is involved — a serious matter in a country where the political leaders are doctrinaires. Theoretically the Church cannot recognize the complete independence of the State, but in actual practice she will admit the *de facto* independence of any temporal power provided it is admitted that it comes from above and not from below — or, in other words, is divinely inspired.

In the face of such circumstances the Church leans toward authoritative government, and as the sovereignty of the people and the religious independence of the State are abominable in her eyes it is not easy to foresee any reconciliation with the laity who are still faithful to the Revolution. In France the Church is traditionally linked with the ruling classes against the practice of the Left, although she is undoubtedly extending her influence far beyond the aristocratic classes. Among her followers are to be found more workingmen than gentlemen, for she gives wonderful personal protection to the families of the humblest citizens, and she often even goes the length of embarrassing the Radicals by her daring. And yet no politician of the Left will ever believe that the Church could work sincerely for the republic.

At this point the anti-clerical party traces a boundary of such importance that it dominates our political life. To be anti-clerical, of course, it is not necessary to be anti-religious. In France, where strained relations perpetually exist between the Church and the State, nearly everyone is nominally Roman

Catholic, and therefore some practical method must be found according to which politics and religion can be carried on independently.

As a matter of fact, the French mind is trained to throw out the clutch with marvelous ease when religion and politics are to be kept in their respective spheres. The existence of the Church alongside the republic would be impossible except in this atmosphere of intellectual liberty mingled with skepticism and subtlety, with a highly developed civilization behind it.

The following impressions written by an Alsatian friend of mine are interesting in this connection: —

'The French are not sufficiently mystic to be ruled by the Catholic Church. I sometimes think that the French Catholic has unconsciously come to an understanding with his church in order to quiet his conscience, to absolve himself in advance, as it were. He is thus completely at ease in his private life, perfectly poised and self-possessed, and without the slightest fear of the terrible impending deity who broods over the Germans.'

I know of no more representative type of Frenchman than the anti-clerical member of Parliament whose wife is a regular churchgoer and whose daughters are at the convent. Jaurès was a case in point, as was once duly noted by a heckler at a political meeting. 'My friend,' answered Jaurès with good humor, 'no doubt your wife obeys you. Unfortunately I am less privileged!' Everyone laughed, for they all understood and many were probably in the same boat. As a matter of fact, if the anti-clerical Frenchman happens to have a pretty wife, he thinks it is just as well to let the priest keep an eye on her. This is the secret of our family life, but, as in the Orient, common sense forbids our discussing it.

III

In the nineteenth century the various social classes, using the term without legal significance, were clearly grouped according to their political tendencies, for or against the spirit of 1789.

In this connection let us first consider the peasant and the village craftsman, whose attitude — except where they came under the influence of the Church — may be summed up as an instinctive resistance to the priest and the château. Sometimes to-day the nobleman and the priest may not be on the best of terms, but in the most rural districts the political balance of their claim to domination and the resistance to it still holds good.

Like the peasant and the artisan, the factory worker — a later social type — was originally imbued with the revolutionary spirit, to an even more passionate degree. Class war came from other countries later on, but we had a working-class movement of our own, which has not lost its significance even to-day. I can remember a time, not so very far back, when many workmen were simply Republicans.

We next come to the small civil servant of ordinary birth and education, thoroughly under the thumb of an administration related to those in authority, but eager to emancipate himself under the banner of the republic which he felt belonged to him. At the time of Gambetta, the schoolmaster and the postman were the village enthusiasts for the cause. The middle and the lower classes, who were always losing their more brilliant members as they passed on to better things, were all the more resentful of the snobbish-

ness of the rich, and therefore loyal to an order working for equality. It was in these various groups that the budding republic found its most spontaneous and faithful supporters on the morrow of May 16, 1877.

On the other hand there are certain classes whose ideals are incompatible with the New Order: the Church, for the reasons given; the nobility, which naturally clings to its traditions of hierarchy, and successfully enough, too, in some districts; and the bourgeoisie, promoted in its turn to a position of social authority. Each has its own satellites: the Catholics, devoted to the priest; the poor, assisted by the Church and the rich; the small farmers, fearing the great landowner; the tradesman of the village and small town, frightened by the thought of a boycott; and finally employees, domestic servants, and laborers, kept in a state of dependence. Wherever society is bound by hierarchy or organization, it tends to free itself from the spirit of 1789 in order to revert to other ideals. It is hard to realize how far tradition, sometimes in modern guise, still exerts its influence. The people, with their naïve idealism, always hope to win in the end, but the wise know that they are dreaming of a Utopia.

The line dividing these two groups stands out as clearly as the contours on a map. The people of the lower classes naturally mingle only with one another, and the rich and powerful also keep to themselves. Both feel they are on the defensive, and so they are. In every French community we find the schoolmaster and his followers eager to emancipate the people, while behind the priest, the nobleman, and the rich bourgeois are lined up the Conservatives, who consider that, as the masses are incapable of governing either themselves or anyone else, they must keep them under their tutelage. The two temperaments are so definitely opposed that it is difficult to judge them fairly, for everything depends on the point of view.

'Those who are familiar with the provinces,' says M. François Mauriac, 'know that contemporary France was born of the mortal sin of envy. The peasant shuts his eyes and casts his vote for the Left, certain that he can make no mistake if he votes against those who wash and go to Mass. He loathes any distinction in dress, occupation, or ideas.'

It is true, and yet we cannot fail to admit that there is a certain grandeur in this appreciation of personal dignity, a sentiment born of the Revolution. As the explosive power of this ferment is still anything but exhausted, timid foreigners, not unrightly, believe that France is a dangerous country, for nothing is harder to swallow than the doctrine that every human being has the right to think freely, to form his own opinions, and to lead his own life. This theory is feared alike by Anglo-Saxon Protestants and by the Roman Catholic Church, and everywhere the great majority implicitly condemn it. Our poor little village enthusiast seems to be fighting in the front trenches for humanism!

This is the key to French politics, which would be incomprehensible if we lost sight of the fact that the counter-revolutionary party keeps constantly rebuilding itself as its spirit crystallizes into new forms. Although it has long been threatened on the Left by the Marxians and Communists, — whom it detests, — our Democracy must still defend itself against the *ancien régime*, although that is now out of date, as its own followers are the first to admit. It is difficult to explain these things in a country like the United States, where political reaction does not exist, or even in England, where tradition is not only

accepted but almost childishly revered by the man in the street.

IV

These political creeds have left an indelible impression on the country. First there is the tendency to a constant outbidding in our political programme, which seems to be the degenerate outcome of the popular belief that to-morrow will be better than to-day, and therefore we must progress at all costs — in other words, go to the Left. In this sense democracy is a living movement, and therefore programmes are less important than relative positions, so no one ever has any luck who tries to fight someone more advanced than himself. Even if he happens to be a Socialist, he is sure to be called a reactionary, while the pure flame of democracy will invariably aid the Moderate fighting a Royalist. This is the essence of the great game of politics, as it is played not only in Narbonne or Toulon, but even in our most northern provinces. In purely business discussions such an attitude is perfectly absurd, but if we admit that our politics are based on sentiment this mystic attraction to the Left, as of the pilgrims to Mecca or the mad Captain Hatteras of Jules Verne to the north, falls naturally in line with the general direction of democracy.

No party label can resist this attraction, for at all costs one must be — or seem to be — the most progressive. On the first ballot many a Southerner votes on principle for the candidate most to the Left, a method which, by carrying the system to its logical conclusion, also reaches the climax of absurdity. Describing a southern constituency in his deep and witty book, *Le Monarque*, Pierre Mille sums up the situation in a single sentence: 'They had a Socialist committee which was Republican, and a Republican committee which was Royalist.' In this game the great trick is to spot them right, for the Radical-Socialists come to be only pale-pink Moderates, Marseilles can offer us 'patriotic Socialists' who swear by the *Action Française*, and the Var is already preparing us Governmental-Communists.

I once saw a poster in a station in a little town in the Western States which read in enormous letters, 'See us increase!' This perfect expression of the boosting spirit would, if transposed into politics, delight the Mediterranean, where 'progress' knows no respite. I remember hearing of a man in the Department of Hérault who, on meeting the local member who had been put up as a Radical-Socialist six months earlier, asked to what party he then belonged.

'Radical-Socialist, the same as you elected me.'

'You don't say so,' was the priceless reply. 'Then you are making no progress!'

In this the South is simply a caricature of the rest of the country, yet, if we run for a seat, might we not safely follow the advice of Duo Caroli and exclaim, 'Don't lag behind. Don't mark time. We must get on. Let us show them that the Department of X is determined to progress!'

Of course, although there is a great deal of talk about all this, there may not be the slightest intention of putting any of it into practice. 'We may as well discuss reforms,' says the wise old 'Monarch' of Pierre Mille, 'but it might be dangerous to carry them out.' It makes one think of the opera chorus which sings interminably, 'March, march,' without ever moving a step. How representative the prudent Southerner was who remarked, 'To the Left, to the Left — but not further!'

Meanwhile our politics are so bound

down by this logomachy that it has perverted the very idea of government so far as the parties of the Left are concerned. They feel instinctively that discipline is arbitrary, that order must be reactionary, and that authority means tyranny. To them liberty is purely a negative claim, and when they are in power they literally cannot tell what is sound from what is unsound. Indeed, for that matter, most Frenchmen can't anyway. In private life we love method and order, so we lay down good rules because we know how to follow them. In public life, however, the progressive Republican feels he must overlook disorder, for if he tried to set it right he would risk being called reactionary. In his opinion to govern is to be reactionary nine times out of ten — especially if he is not a member of the government. At any rate a hundred voters in the Radical-Socialist group are ready, waiting, to prove it. Thus we are paying for an arbitrary rule in the past which has too long outlived its time.

Alain describes power as essentially reactionary, always tending to become an end in itself, and unfailingly corrupting those who exercise it. Pelletan, according to him, is the only man who has never betrayed it. Such is the experience of a country in which power has been autocratic — but can we ever hope to set up an efficient government if we are to be deterred by such fears?

These political theories were quite suitable to the electorate of peasants and artisans which we inherited from the French Revolution, before the great industrial changes took place at the end of the nineteenth century. Society then was not complex, being composed chiefly of independent landowners, with a simple organization of government and production. This old foundation, on which our present system is largely built, was made up of satisfied people, tending to the Left politically, but socially conservative. Beneath a coquettish froth of disorder lies an instinctive repulsion from anarchy, for apart from personal favors we really do not want social change — hence how much leisure to indulge in political controversies! This explains the curious indifference to reform among so many of the Radicals, although they always have the word on the tip of their tongue. 'Resistance to authority rather than practical reform is their watchword,' admits Alain, and really it is marvelous how satisfied these progressives seem to be with the existing social order! In our democracy, so daring in theory and so temperate in practice, any kind of political outbidding is safe and easy because it is developing in a sphere where change is not desired.

But what is to happen now that a new conception of production comes to transform the face of the world and disturb the balance of our social structure?

V

The French Revolution recognized only the individual, and ignored the working classes, as at that time industrial life hardly existed. The problems arising from the new conception of production only began to make themselves felt from about 1880 onward; in fact, they only came properly into existence at the time of the Revolution of June 1848. It was only in the last decade of the century, when the Socialist Party began to be powerful, that social questions really competed with the political matters which had hitherto exclusively claimed our attention. Although industry is still only of secondary importance in France, its repercussions have had a distinct political influence on our various social classes.

The transformation of the workingman was less marked in France, no doubt, than in any of the other great Western nations, for our craftsman lingered on long after the Industrial Revolution. He was a fine type, imbued with professional honor, his very being bound up in his work, according to true French tradition. Behind his barricades it was he who was mainly responsible for the revolutions of the past century, which drew their inspiration, not from class hatred or revolutionary doctrine, but from a democratic ideal. He later became a Socialist, and again it was he who originated the Socialist Party and the Confédération Générale du Travail. His Socialism was always true to the ideals of the nineteenth century, and therefore he is not and never will be a true Marxian.

The factory worker of to-day, at least when transformed by mass production, is a very different type, for he no longer feels that he has a trade. Once a Frenchman has let himself become the servant of a machine he loses his pride in his work, becomes discontented and devoid of political conscience. In Paris the factory worker is the backbone of the Communist Party, a fact which proves that machinery has exerted a fatal influence. Its introduction in France marks a step backward from the political standard of earlier generations.

Wherever our government administration has been industrialized, the small civil servant has undergone a similar change, although if he happens to be isolated in a village he is still a simple and traditional enthusiast for political progress. In the latter case, I do not believe his psychology has altered, in spite of the fact that he now advocates Socialism and Communism instead of the republic, as his father did fifty years ago. But if he is attached to an industrialized administration, like the post office in Paris or one of the large cities, his case is different, for he is then inclined to stray from the old democratic ideals, which originally attracted him, into the ranks of the extreme Left. The collective demands of professional worker, class warfare, and the revolutionary spirit lay hold of him, and he naturally joins one of the parties of social discontent.

The result of the Industrial Revolution has been to turn the bourgeois to the Right. It brought him without struggle to the front ranks socially, for the nobility were soon little more than a memory. Politically he feared the workman, who also was becoming an important influence in the State. Since the days of June 1848 the bourgeois has shown himself in his true conservative colors, for he has abandoned, one after another, all the ideals he learned at the time of the Revolution. With a few rare exceptions the bourgeoisie now belongs to the party of resistance, and hardly any of its sons would wish to remake a really democratic republic, I think, if it had to be done.

The religious evolution of the bourgeois has been no less marked. Up to 1848 he was usually a follower of Voltaire, although he felt that religion was a necessity for the masses, but after 1849 he suddenly began to regard the priest as a valuable aid to the police in keeping order. The salons eventually ceased fighting the Church, although in the smoking rooms the unbelievers still continued to rail against it. The generation that came of age at the end of the century were weary of excessive individualism, and longed for moral and social order. They rallied around Catholicism, not for the matter-of-fact reasons of their ancestors, but because they needed a constructive philosophy of life. Since the Dreyfus Case and the war, religion has become an integral

part of the convictions of the bourgeoisie. Thus in the past hundred years they have gone right over to the other side of the fence.

'Midway in his intellectual development, the writer or the politician,' says Barrès, 'finds that he must stop chasing his predecessors in order to deal as swiftly as possible with his successors. He becomes a Moderate, as the expression goes.' This is precisely what happened to the bourgeoisie when they were no longer irritated by the diminished ranks of the nobility. Meanwhile a Caliban, daily gaining in strength, began to push them into the background.

Where do the people stand in all this — I refer to the People with a capital *P*, the mystical democracy which preceded Karl Marx and class warfare, the People of Michelet? They have changed little, for the spirit of conservatism persisted with them as the small landowners with a stake in the country became more numerous. In France it is impossible to take liberties in the name of Marx or Lenin against the property of the small people, although the masses are still faithful to the mysticism of equality and democracy. At heart they are still inclined to the Left, not only against the Church, but more urgently against the dictates of capitalism. Recently one has discerned signs of a new demagogy, rural in character, attacking the great landowners on behalf of the small. Public opinion with us is still jealously hostile to big business, and although bankers and industrial magnates may exert all the influence they wish, they must not do it openly.

Have the French people become more international as the result of their contact during the war with the armies and people of the five continents? Theoretically, perhaps they have, although they still obstinately cling to their own customs and ideals, and are largely indifferent to new conditions. Feminism, prohibition, and departments of health mean not very much to them. They stand firmly between the priest on the Right, whose leadership they refuse, and anarchy and revolution on the Left, which offend their bourgeois susceptibilities; and finally they decide that international Socialism does not suit either their habits or their routine. So they remain negative, but still sufficiently important to create a great unorganized but stable democracy.

VI

The contradiction in French character is obvious. A Frenchman wears his heart on the Left and his pocket on the Right — and in practice every Frenchman has a pocket! His innate love of order — his own interests, to express it more crudely — counteracts the extreme political ideas which delight him. This Don Quixote is accompanied by a Sancho Panza who never leaves him for a moment. His slogan, 'Always to the Left,' is only used as a symbolic gesture, for his practical politics run up against barriers piled quite as high as progress stretches in front. This explains why foreigners treat us as dangerous revolutionaries when we talk, and as slow bourgeois of the old type when we do not come to the point. It also explains why we have been for a century on the offensive against autocracy in all its forms, and are now on the defensive against a new type of production which we find disturbing. We remain the republic of little people, preoccupied, according to Alain, with the 'continuous struggle of the small against the great.' We are always ready to protect the small and weak, the little landowners, the little employees, the little

pensioners, and even the little cheats.

All the achievements of the present material epoch of super-collectivism will eventually be accomplished in France, but outside of politics. Our political structure belongs to an earlier period, and offers neither methods nor solutions for such a programme. Possibly these great achievements are essentially anti-democratic, or at least not in sympathy with the democratic spirit which refuses to sacrifice the individual to the discipline necessary for coöperation. Although in this sense France is not politically adapted to the needs of the present day, I hesitate to condemn her altogether, for it may be that a vital instinct forbids her to make an adaptation which might in the distant future imperil the individual, who is the corner stone of her civilization.

THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS FRONT

BY WILLIAM L. SULLIVAN

I

Can it not be laid to heart by the clever gentlemen who are making it their life's vocation to cure us of God that religion, however much they dislike it, is at all events profound? Will they not remember that it has been professed and served by great minds, indeed by the very greatest; and that of all the deeper experiences of the race it is the oldest and the noblest? And will they not in consequence regard it as requiring, in one who treats of its foundations, a laboriously exercised mind and also something of a soul?

These are simple questions which there should be no need of asking, but as things are there is urgent need of asking them. Our advocates of the great negation force us to ask them. For a good many of them deal with religion as though any kind of thought would suffice for it, however loose; any kind of culture, however provincial; any kind of dismissal, however summary and crude. In fact, some of them employ in the treatment of it methods so hasty, and logical processes so leaky, that if they studied any other subject in like manner they would lose their intellectual reputation. And this is too bad, first because an ill-educated nation is being led to believe such nonsense as that a trained modern intelligence cannot accept God any longer, and so pitches forward into the spiritual anarchy which the men who are creating it are utterly powerless to cure, and secondly because religious principles need the constant purification of criticism. In this field, as in every other, criticism is the conscience of truth. But the criticism, to be useful, must be fit for the thing criticized. In America, to our misfortune, religious criticism sheds but little light on its subject and none at all on our fame.

It is strange indeed that the dilettante should select religion as the region of his casual holiday, and stranger still that a rapt audience should attend upon his tale. The very nature of religion should impose upon one who

examines it the most careful thought and the most delicate perception, to say nothing of the responsibility that should weigh upon one's words in a matter so grave with consequences. Religion is the first beautiful companion that man encountered in his wilderness. It is the pathway between life and death that is worn deepest by the feet of the perpetually seeking generations. It is never far away when man knows exaltation and rapture. It is always present when he transcends himself in unearthly consecrations. It opens the door of vision when his genius hungers and thirsts for the substance behind all symbols, and other hand that can open it there is none. It is by his side when he walks the high and lonely places where he makes the discovery of himself. In life it is with him, illuminating him at his noblest, scourging him at his basest — the latter presence even more wistfully loved than the former. Neither in death does it leave him; but when all other voices moan of irreparable defeat, it alone lifts the cry of defiance and stands on the ruins of mortality announcing mysterious and splendid victory for the fallen.

Man cannot escape religion if he would. Return to it he must after however long a denial, unless he changes his nature and becomes something else. For it is the form and figure, the throbbing pulse and the living flame, of the dream which is his one and only enduring reality, the perfection that drives him through yearning and tears and beyond the stars in search of a fulfillment not to be found in all the fabric of the world.

This is something of what religion has been — a religion, I mean, that includes the divine. A religion with its head cut off, which rises no higher than the resolutions of a philanthropic committee, we may for the present leave out of account. Destiny is dealing with that in its own thorough way. If, then, religion has been and is all this, if it is so deeply rooted in mind and soul, if it does for humanity what nothing else can do and yet must be done, then it is no subject for frivolous haughtiness and superficial learning. It is too deep, too close, too sacred. Hence if someone tells us that it is invalid throughout, and that man's most tragic delusion is ever to have looked upward, we shall thoughtfully listen to him, but shall ask that he have spent long labor in understanding what great light he extinguishes in history and in souls. But if he 'barges' in on us with crippled argument that he has not toiled over, with catch phrases, with slogans, and with disdain, we have a right to send him back to his own place; he has nothing to say to mature men.

Now this is the kind of thing that we are getting on the anti-religious front in America, if we may borrow a phrase from Moscow. Whatever the cause is — whether it is due to the spiritual exhaustion which has brought on our famine in philosophic minds; whether it is the disparagement of intellect and the exalting of the infantile which are the current fashion in psychology; whether it is the lurch to immoralism which now is receiving a benediction from erudition; or whether it is the disposition to go where bedlam is loudest which is observable in obsequious academies and pulpits alike — we cannot but notice the incoherence and even the intolerance of the great warfare against the divine.

II

Consider, for example, the severest pedagogical injunction which the leaders of that warfare lay upon us — namely, that we are to submit our opinions to test and proof. We are, they tell us, to look things straight in

the eye. We are to be tough-minded. We are to abhor hasty statement, easy assent, and gross credulity. We are to have the cold impartiality of science and the austere parsimony of truth. And when, so we are assured, we are cleansed by this catharsis we shall find our religious beliefs, even the most fundamental of them, vanishing away. Should we, however, shrink from the penitential discipline, should we catch at romantic ideas and facile solutions, we shall be outlawed from the great society, and cannot be so much as doorkeepers in the mansion of the civilized minority.

From this I suppose the inference is both justified by logic and required by courtesy that our guides are themselves exemplars of this ascetic habit. Are they? Consider in answer the case of Professor Millikan. This gentleman bears perhaps the most distinguished name in American science. He is known everywhere to be a believer in God. He is consequently a stumblingblock to those who want it believed that as scientific method comes in religious principles go out. He stands in the way of that belief, and although secure of his fame in all other respects must be discredited in this. So a writer in a learned periodical declares that Professor Millikan's spiritual convictions are probably due to atavistic emotionalism. And the chivalrous charge is repeated with every indication of approval by one of our philosophers in a published book directed to the abolition of Deity.

We shall hold back our indignation, although it is impossible not to feel it. What pertains to our purpose is that the kind of intelligence which is capable of this descent sets itself before us as so stern a supervisor of its integrity, and so vigilant a guardian of its pure enclosure, that it cannot let in the proposition that God exists. A little rowdy intolerance, however, may walk in, and welcome! Our great physicist, we may be sure, has not exempted his most important conviction from the scrutiny to which he habitually submits all his other convictions. He sees the universe to be interpretable rationally. If it were not, neither his own science nor any other would be possible. And he makes rationality the foundation of interpretability. What other foundation can there possibly be? Hence follows his conclusion that it is reason that makes the discourse of existence reasonable. These steps to a sovereign reason from the existence of our own are plain enough. But it is easier to invite contempt to deal with them than for a hostile mind to try its teeth upon them. And so our chaste pioneers are not above publishing a charge that is irrational and coarse, and setting down a man superior in every element of power to themselves, not as a thinker who reflects, but as a child who only feels. Such minds, I fear, we shall have to call not spotless, but as unchaste as Ashtoreth. It is to be dreaded also that they are in danger of a spreading form of seizure which we may designate theophobia, an obsession quite beyond the healing power of reason and reluctant to any exorcism known.

We have made a bad start and it will not get better as we go on. It will be remembered that we are speaking of men who are jealous with a fierce jealousy of admitting into their heads opinions which are shaky, and who would rather, if we may say so, have their throats cut than admit anything positively absurd. They carry this monastic renunciation of the presumably unproved so far that some of them are now maintaining that to believe in God is immoral. This novelty in ethics defies comment. Let it stand unencumbered with words as a memorial to a

terrible purity. Yet they puzzle me, these knights of the vanguard. For, although they reach for the whip if I say that I believe in God, I am favored with their approval if I say that when an infant sucks its thumb it is unconsciously pursuing a sexual adventure. Freud says this, so it is all right. Again it is all right if, observing the same infant falling asleep after feeding at its mother's breast, I declare that the child sinks into the slumber of sexual satiety. No censure for that! No offense in it for the most antiseptic minds!

Once more, when a little boy declares his intention of becoming a locomotive engineer when he grows up, you may say, again with Freud's support, that the lad is expressing a subtly disguised desire for sexual gratification. Furthermore you may interpret shell shock as meaning that a vast flood of *libido* or sex energy has flowed over into the inner self and produced an immensely augmented narcissism or self-love; that the narcissism, doubled or quadrupled by the turbulent libido, has to be suppressed in battle; and that the repression causes the disorganization known as shell shock. All this passes the test of acceptable opinion. For holding it you are not blamed; rather you are praised as sailing down the full current of the contemporary renaissance. And if we inquire what then in heaven's name shall be kept out of the mind if these preposterous things are let in, we seem to be answered: Practically nothing except God!

III

The thing becomes diverting. We are making discoveries in the cathartic mind. Perhaps, then, we may go on. There are some students of color as a factor in evolution who hold that the flamingo got the pink tints of its plumage in this manner: The crocodiles which lived in the vicinity of flamingoes long ago, being shortsighted, fancied that the tinted birds standing in the shallow water were the rising or the setting sun and so let them alone. The hues which served so well became perpetuated; such flamingoes as were less fortunately colored were eaten; and we have the flamingo of to-day a living testimony to the value of resembling crepuscular dawn and afternoon. Is it all right to believe this? Certainly; it is eminently respectable. Still further let us take man's beard and woman's beardlessness — a curious phenomenon, since both man and woman came from apes, and the female ape is quite as hairy as the male. It came to pass, sages say, because some of the earliest women were born with less hairy or possibly quite hairless faces. Instead of being crushed with shame as unaccountable freaks, these ancient dames discovered something amazing happening to them. The males round about fell violently in love with them. But this was not all. There was more of marvel and surprise. The males, once smitten by the smooth-faced ladies, refused to fall in love with the other kind. The bearded damsels, old as their lineage was, were ousted by the parvenues, could get no husbands, and died forlorn and childless. What began as a freak extirpated the original stock. On the other hand such males as may have been beardless were shunned by the females and could get no wives. The women coveted whiskered, as earnestly as the men set their hearts on unwhiskered, spouses. And as a result of it, here, with such physiognomies as we have, we are!

May a man believe this? With the utmost distinction of modernity, yes. But a man may not believe in God? Ah, no! That is too insecure an hypothesis! And we turn away feeling that it would be too rude to ask whether

the billy goat got his beard by the same discriminate selection of æsthetic love.

Perhaps we can tolerate one example more. Although we are informed that the argument on the existence of Deity is closed for intelligent people and closed with a loud negative, persons worthy of that description may still carry on the debate over the cursorial or arboreal origin of wings. It runs thus: Birds evolved from reptiles; and the ancestral reptile, one of the lizards probably, had to get wings or a bird it could not be. How did it get them? The cursorial school maintains that for ages this family of lizards ran rapidly over the ground on their hind legs, flapping their forelegs as they went. After ages of this apparently insane procedure the forelegs changed their outer form and inner skeletal and muscular structure and became wings. No, say the arborealists, it was not so. What happened was that this lizard was not a runner but a tree climber, and got into the habit of incessantly jumping from trees to the ground. As it jumped it spread out its forelegs, which acquired, after countless years, first possibly a parachute form and later the wing form.

We may indeed marvel at the perseverance of this tree jumper in letting go his hold for a thousand centuries before he had acquired any device for easing his fall. The breakages must have been enormous and the casualties appalling. We may also wonder how it is that monkeys which have been jumping from trees for ages on end have developed thus far not a sign or rudiment of wings. But these solicitations of curiosity are beside the point. The point is that wise and solemn heads may dignify the cursorial-arboreal debate while hushed academies look on; whereas if one should mention the divine as worth our study, we should hear from the anti-religious front that it is a subject to which the scrupulous mind can no longer descend.

Since, then, we see it permissible to cover creation with a fog of theory, fashionable to entertain conjectures which can never reach to even the lowest grade of knowledge, and praiseworthy to erect learned memorials to absurdity, but censurable to hold a conviction which the greatest minds have held and unnumbered generations have lived by, we cannot be blamed if we regard this whole business as confusing and incoherent. May we not even be pardoned for thinking that the claim to intellectual austerity is humbug? The men who make it seem to have a credulity and to show an intolerance as capacious as may be found in any of the less advanced souls who tremble before them. And so in the general method and intellectual climate of our monitors we end with disillusion and the sense of having been pompously fooled.

IV

Shall we be similarly afflicted when we pass from general method to particular argument? In order to answer this, suppose we look into the argument most frequently used at present for the destruction of spiritual foundations — the Copernican argument, as it is beginning to be called. Three men, we are reminded, have reduced us to our proper insignificance and put an end to our primitive dream that we are godlike or that there is any God for us to resemble. They are Copernicus, Darwin, and Freud. Copernicus began the revelation of the vastness of the universe and the consequent triviality of our poor molecule of a planet. Darwin showed man's ancestry reaching not up to the stars and their glory, but down to the mud and its fermentation. And Freud has pushed our humiliation into

the last pit by the knowledge that what we thought was the light of spirit is only the sickly gleam of funguses growing rank in the cellars of physiology. Our masters in the luminous life have the habit of saluting with a strange joy every sign of our degradation. They perceive, and correctly, that man if he has a God will be majestic, and if majestic will have a God. But the nearer we are lowered to the things that crawl, and the more pitiable our place is in an ultimately senseless universe, the more likely it will be that over us is no eternal splendor and awaiting us no transcendence of Truth and Beauty everlasting. Our nothingness is a price they gladly pay if only Deity is made nothingness also. And just now it is the Copernican plea that rules the favorite to this end.

It runs as follows: There are from three to thirty billion suns. Our sun is of third-rate size among them. Our earth is a pathetic cinder spinning round it. Ourselves are ephemera clinging to the cinder with our ridiculous little heads thrust out into empty and prodigious space. With our whole solar system making up, let us say, one five-billionth part of the universe, how can we suppose that the mighty power behind it all is concerned with us? How can we pretend that this power is our Father? The notion of a Father-God arose because men thought that they and their planet formed the centre of existence. How can it survive when we are reduced in the grand scheme to all but zero? And how can we homunculi presume to know anything of the Originator of the stupendous cosmos if an Originator there is?

The argument contains three propositions: first, that physical size is the determining factor in attracting God's attention, if there is a God, since the smaller a thing is the less likely it is to interest Him; secondly, that men came to believe in God through a miscalculation in measurement — they imagined a Father-God because they fancied it was a kitchen universe; and thirdly, that physical magnitude is a barrier to thought — the vast universe now known forbids us to form any conception of its ultimate source if it has one. On all this let us briefly comment.

To the first proposition: if God's lack of interest in us is because we are so little, then it must follow that He would take interest in us if we were enlarged. How large should we have to be before His interest began? If we were a hundred miles tall should we attract His attention? The answer, I gather, is: No, that is not enough. Ten thousand miles tall? We may probably expect another negative. But if we towered up to a stature equivalent to the orbit of Neptune we might possibly enter upon significance for Deity. And if we stood so high that our hair was singed by Betelgeuse we might be admitted to the honor of audience with the Demiurge.

Roaring nonsense? It is indeed, but it is the roaring nonsense of very solemn and learned men who seem to shrink from thinking things out. They join together two incommensurable things — bulk, which has all the physical measurements, and meaning or value, which has n't a single one. A divorce of the two, I fear, must be pronounced on the ground of incompatibility for union and the miscegenation of diverse species. But not only does the argument go thus far; it goes farther. It makes the higher of the two depend upon and be a function of the lower. It puts meaning or value as a secondary appendage to bulk. And this is such an inversion of the proprieties of taste and reason that, in addition to the sentence of nullity just given, we should impose a penalty of some kind

upon the man who has committed it. And the worst penalty will consist in fetching him into the Arctic winter which reason inhabits, there to shiver till he is acclimated. Fortunately, however, nonsense has this quality — that it cannot be followed through to the end. And so our learned friends do not themselves adopt the valuation scheme which they attribute to God. If they did they would judge a small child to be worthless, a man of normal size barely acceptable, and a mountain of fatness a paragon of his day.

The second proposition was that men made a mistake in measurement, and thought that there was a God because they thought the universe was a cabin. First of all we may remind the logicians whom we are concerned with that they have forgotten one detail in making this statement. They have forgotten to prove it. I do not know a single one of them that even attempts to prove it. But it needs a great deal of proof, and we cannot let it slide in on the slippery surface of cool assumption. Not only, however, is it negatively inadequate because unproved; it is positively worthless, I venture to say, because it is false. Belief in God no more arose from measuring the universe than from smelling it. What it arose from is the essential structure of reason, whose first and irrepressible question in the presence of anything is: What accounts for it? That is how belief in God arose, and not from any computation in yards, miles, or light-years. And this question — What accounts for it? — presses upon us with its full force, whether the universe is the size of a parish or has a diameter that staggers mathematics. Size has absolutely nothing to do with the search for the rationale of a thing; indeed it is itself included within the compass of that search.

And the source — that is, the intellectual source — from which the conviction of a God who is a Father arose is this: the reason in us that looks for the reason in things is seeking for its kindred. Knowledge means hunting for the rationality immanent in things and rethinking it. And when reason finds rationality it has discovered its kindred. And since this immanent rationality is the original and our own rationality its derivative, what is more inevitable and right than that by analogy we call it Father? The whole process comes from the indestructible fact that reason communes only with its like and cannot possibly commune with anything else. Physical bulk has no more to do with it than color or sound or the combustion of stellar gas. The notion, therefore, that the communion of kindred natures is made impossible by bigness, although bigness has absolutely nothing in common with the tie that constitutes the kinship, seems to be very weird indeed. And in its weirdness let us leave it.

The third proposition, that we can form no idea of the ultimate power because its works are stupendous, need not delay us long. There is only one condition that would prevent us from forming an idea of the principle of the whole, and that would be if the whole were a chaos. Then indeed any idea of it would be impossible, for it would contradict the power in us which forms an idea of anything. For an idea is a form of reason, and if there were chaos — that is, irrationality — there would be nothing to which a form of reason could apply. Science would be impossible, and we, like everything else, should be mad. But since the universe is not a chaos but a cosmos, then not only *may* we say, but we *must* say, that its organizing principle, its constituent ground, is of the nature of rationality; for when we say cosmos we say objectified rationality. The affirmation proceeds

again from the nature of reason and the responsive nature of things. Once more size as mere bulk has nothing to do with it. What we are concerned with all through is no huge aggregate of sense qualities that turns our lower imagination tipsy, but the constituent life of a system that makes our higher reason coherent. Every page and paragraph of science postulates a rational universe. Therefore the principle of the universe is rational. Not only is it not presumptuous to say this, but we should wreck the whole order of the world if we did not. And that would be an achievement which really would be presumptuous.

Finally, there is another queer feature to the Copernican argument. It is so preoccupied with irrelevant physical hugeness that it ignores the only thing which it is vital not to ignore — namely, spiritual majesty. It fixes our attention on billions of suns. But we ask: Can any one of these globes of gas on fire, or can all of them put together, perform a single act of heroism, or live in self-sacrificing loyalty, or suffer for justice, or die for truth? No. Yet this atom called man whom these men wish to make paltry can do that, has magnificently done it, and will magnificently do it again provided they do not corrupt him with the sophistry of worthless bigness. Before this capacity to live and die for what is august, all the fires of incandescent stars fall away to ashes and leave the human soul confronting eternal Holiness as its ultimate explanation, its last end, its final authority, and its only kindred and companion within all the horizons of the world.

Instead of man's being extinguished by the stars it is the stars that are extinguished by man. He alone, with whatever other spiritual beings substantially like him that the universe may contain, speaks the language of the Infinite; alone transcends the spatial; alone answers when heavenly voices speak to him; alone has a hunger and a thirst which neither the earth nor all those conflagrant spheres can assuage, but only the central Spirit can allay, only the eternal Truth and Right whose likeness he is, whose child through unimaginable ascents to fulfillment he shall ever be.

V

The conclusion, then, seems forced upon us that neither in method nor in detail have our captains in the assault on high Heaven given us any illustrious performance. Nor should we, I believe, find this conclusion greatly modified if, in addition to the Copernican argument, we had time to examine the negation based upon the work of Darwin and Freud. The whole anti-religious effort, especially as we observe it in America, is abrupt and slipshod. It does not go to the heart of things. Like most of the rest of our philosophy it does not descend to first principles; and like a good part of our philosophy it is declamatory, and more suggestive of the proceedings of a caucus than of the reticent sobriety of a search for truth. If the thing is to be done at all it could be better done. But it will not be better done until there is an abatement of the grosser symptoms of theophobia.

When, further, we consider how flat and common, how destitute of insight and emaciated in power, the proffered substitutes for God are, we are obliged to say that the whole design slithers away to very dreary stuff at the end. So impotent in imagination are these substitutes, and so much more marked by sentimentality than by coherence, that nothing is left us but to call the endeavor to discover something just as good as God the worst bankruptcy in

history. If the destructive effort was not too brilliant, the constructive is hardly less than shabby. And if we look into the latest development of it the shabbiness is seen to be moral as well as intellectual. We are now having morality defined as conduct that best serves the human physiological organism. We hear from an eminent philosopher in England that infidelity in marriage is not a thing to take offense at, but to expect and condone. From another student of social *mores* we learn that the revered mother-image and wife-image are coming to be regarded as suffocating to man's erotic life, and that they are on the way to being replaced by the mistress-image and the courtesan-image, which will be so little revered and so subject to casual change that they will relieve eroticism of danger from suffocation forevermore. Another scholar tells us that libidinousness, whoever commits it, need give us no concern if only it is attended with 'artistry.' Still others admit frankly that in sex habits we are reverting to the level of savages and that it is right we should. And so civilization arrives at its final splendid term.

All this, with its complete lack of an historical sense, with its impressionism instead of thought, with its powerlessness to reason out what animality is or to give it its ordered place in an ascending scale of values, and with its essential levity in taking account of consequences, is but the last step in a crooked course. Mutilate the human spirit in the manner now so fiercely pursued; make man a trivial biped, his reason a comic incident accessory to his belly, his conscience an echo of the stupidities of the jungle, his aspiration a by-product of sexuality, his life an animal episode in the midst of chaos and the lightless bosom of death, and his universe a brazen solicitation to delusion—and you will one day see unfolded the ruin that is implicit in these germs of desperation and collapse. We do not see them unfolded yet, for we are still living on the spiritual nourishment stored for us by those who aspired and adored. Mighty souls have led forth our migration from the sty, and the shining remembrance of them lingers with us still. It will remain with us, we hope, forever. And perhaps one of the reasons why we shall not cast the memory away is the plain sight of the results of deserting it.

These results are now laid before us in the outspoken words of the men who are counseling us to extinguish the light of spirit. They imply that there is a new firmament — the abdomen; a new end for philosophy — to prove that man is ridiculous; a new purpose for culture — to bestow on animalism the touch of the æsthete; a new conception of morals — to show that conscience is barbarous; and a new ideal for the home — to be an interval in the pursuit of promiscuity. High lords of thought are saying aloud what twenty years ago the brothel would not have said above a whisper. By such means felicity and dignity are promised to our children, kept happily ignorant that once a luminous spirit spoke in Galilee, and fortunately delivered from the peril of fidelity to a holy and glorious God!

Perhaps, however, the learned men who propose all this do not expect us to adopt it. It may be that in their inmost hearts they hope, and for all we know pray, that we shall continue to believe in God and in our stumbling way try to do His will. Possibly even they might confess to us in secret that, after all, God is the only refuge of sanity from the lunatic asylum which certain of the erudite are so busy in building.

GÖTTERDÄMMERUNG

BY BRADFORD K. DANIELS

It was still and hot under the cherry trees, and the brassy sun seemed to have stuck in the sky halfway down to the horizon. In the dust under the trees, ground fine as flour by tractor and heavy disk plough, hundreds of white Leghorn pullets were lolling, awaiting the time when a cool breeze would draw down from the Cascades, and one after another they would rise, luxuriously stretch a sulphur-tinted wing over a bright yellow shank, and then stroll off in mysteriously selected groups to a neighboring kale field for their evening appetizer of greens.

I was filling the farthest watering trough, idly computing the number of gallons of water two thousand four-months-old pullets consumed daily, when a sharp 'Kut! kut! kut!' from the direction of the kale field warned me that something dangerous to pullets was abroad. And indeed there was, for sliding along through the deep dust was a large snake, on either side of him a rapidly forming wall of excited birds whose sharp call of danger now rose to a staccato chorus.

As the white walls closed in behind him, his snakeship speeded up, displaying an air of jaunty assurance that he could easily escape from this unsolicited bodyguard and gain the tangle of brake ferns and wild blackberry vines that monopolized the fir grove beyond. But Time, that sly old meddler who plays so many cruel jokes upon his creatures, had reduced this once-lordly marauder to a mere four-foot caricature of his ancient self, depriving him not only of the great speed with which he used to swish through the rank vegetation of the primordial world, but of three other weapons, the lack of which nearly proved his undoing on that hot August afternoon. Ultimately, a fourth weapon proved effective when used against those impudent tormentors, any one of which his ancestors could have swallowed whole.

When speed failed to deliver him, the snake paused and cautiously raised his head. But the good old days when that simple act would have placed his eyes several feet above the level of the surrounding field availed him nothing; for his head was now only a pitiable six inches above the dust, and his view cut off by two menacing white walls.

The pause proved not only futile, but dangerous; for one long-shanked pullet that had followed him closely seized his tail, and, bracing her feet, pulled with such suddenness and vim that not only was the snake's progress arrested, but the body was jerked back several inches through the soft dust that offered no suitable contact for the resisting abdominal scales. This daring feat was acclaimed by an enthusiastic chorus of 'Kut, kut, kuts,' and soon a dozen birds were jostling each other for a share in the thrilling sport. Snap! would go the beak, and a good two feet of the snake's body would be lifted clear of the ground, the pale belly revealing the fine polish which nature gives to this part of a reptile in order to reduce friction to a minimum.

In a few moments snake baiting became so popular among the pullets that the traveler's progress was beset with as many difficulties as was ever Bunyan's Pilgrim, and for the first time he showed signs of alarm, even of panic. He shot desperately to one side and then to the other; but always he encountered a row of craning necks and sharp beaks that sapped his courage and turned him back.

These two white walls, flowing steadily on ahead of the prisoner and extending a couple of rods behind him, were straight and compact, suggesting a front as impenetrable as that of Harold's archers at Hastings. Would the serpent prove another William?

Then came the psychological moment, — that tide in the affairs of both beasts and men, — which could easily have brought victory to the pullets had they possessed even a modicum of that most precious gift of the gods — coöperation. One bird whose body had not yet rounded out, and whose comb had not yet begun to redden (still in the tomboy stage, you see!), moved by some long-dormant instinct left over from the time when the jungle fowl had both the strength and the skill to kill snakes, darted forward and delivered a telling blow just where the head joins the body. What ages of experience in fighting reptiles must have lain behind that unerring aim at this vulnerable spot! This truly vicious stroke made the snake coil like a steel spring. At sight of the swift manœuvre all the birds sprang back and stood motionless and silent, each with an alert eye fixed upon the thing which might at any moment lash out at them.

But here the snake's second weapon failed him — lost, no doubt, during an æons-old period of degeneration. He remembered how to coil preparatory to dealing the decisive blow, and he stirred through all his loathsome length under the impulse of an ancient reflex that should have hurled him to victory. But nothing came of it. Again and again he coiled through the ensuing fight; but he never struck, however favorable the opportunity.

And why not? Had the grim joker, Time, slowly and surreptitiously robbed him of his venomous fangs as a penalty for feeding on small rodents and frogs that he could capture without the aid of poison, and had repeated emergencies such as this subsequently drilled into him the discouraging fact that the weapon was gone? Or, assuming that he was descended from non-venomous constrictors, had the same deadly absence of an incentive to keep fit rendered his muscles so flabby and his aim so uncertain that he felt himself no longer equal to the strenuous business of seizing and crushing his prey?

The snake was now halfway across the fifteen-acre orchard, and the choicest fighting spirits among the pullets had pressed to the front. Bird after bird, as though in response to Biblical prophecy, was doing her best to bruise the serpent's head. Then came a masterful piece of strategy that would have brought victory to the hard-pressed reptile had not that arch-humorist, Time, spoiled the manœuvre centuries before it was ever made. Instead of trying to run away from an exceptionally swift assailant, the snake shot in between her legs, and, with a writhing motion that through racial inheritance is still shudderingly repulsive to a human observer, attempted to wrap himself about her. But again the prowess of his ancestors failed him, and the Leghorn pullet, her domestic imbecility momentarily supplanted by the alert instincts of the jungle fowl, leapt high in air and escaped.

Although the now thoroughly weary reptile did not again undertake to trap an assailant in this particular fashion,

he did make use of a part of the trick as a means of protecting his head and gaining ground. For as soon as a bird started to close in upon him he would dart between her legs, when she would shoot upward, and he would slip forward a good six feet before his way was again blocked.

By this time the snake had reached a watering trough some seven feet long and six inches high. Badly mauled, but not yet crippled, he stretched himself at full length close beside it, and slowly flattened out until he seemed gradually to melt into the box on the one side and the dust on the other. Bird after bird turned an inquiring eye upon the trough, saw nothing unusual there, and, presto! in the hen mind there was no longer a serpent in the entire universe. Accordingly, the birds gradually began to stroll away, spreading out over the orchard in utter forgetfulness of the stirring experience through which they had just passed.

With a movement so slow that my eyes could scarcely detect it, the snake raised his head above the side of the trough. Higher and steadily higher it crept, until the repulsive wedge-shaped thing was several inches above the top. But at sight of it a pullet, strolling up for a drink, gave a sharp 'Kut!' which again transformed the entire flock into alert and eager warriors. Back they came in white swarms, milling about the trough to a stirring chorus of 'Kut, kut, kuts.'

In sheer desperation, the snake tried the inside of the trough; but the commotion which he raised in the water drew about him such a throng of enemies that he quickly slid over the side and sped away in the direction of the kale field from which he had started. Then the pullets let loose upon him the acme of their fury. They hammered at his head with a rhythm that suggested the driving of a tent peg at a circus; they tweaked his tail in derisive glee; or, taking a firmer hold, slapped his groggy body into the dust and jerked it out again with a fury that epitomized the hatred of all the animal kingdom for this Cain among the beasts. Suddenly the blind will to fight on seemed to snap within him, and he gave over the struggle and lay still, the body no longer responding to the punishment inflicted upon it. Once motionless, he quickly became to his assailants only a brown stripe in the dust, and again they began to disperse.

For some time the snake did not stir; then slowly and with the utmost caution he again raised his head, pivoting it about at a rate of progress so uncannily uniform as to suggest a panoramic camera photographing the field. The birds had now wandered so far away that they did not detect the motion. Stealthily lowering his head, he again glided toward the kale field; but before he had gone three rods the pullets were once more upon him, and in the face of this last assault he resorted to the only weapon left him. He slowly wound himself into a coil so tight that one could not have touched the ground with a knife blade at any point short of the circumference. At the movement the birds sprang back as usual; but as he remained motionless they again slowly scattered.

So I stood and watched for the next manœuvre of this remarkable creature that, in its patience and resourcefulness, so closely parallels human intelligence, embodying, I suspect, nature's final effort along a certain line of evolution — the attempt to produce a limbless vertebrate that would maintain the balance of power against the limbed varieties. But the effort failed; and one of the limbed vertebrates, for want of any sufficiently restraining force, is rapidly overrunning the earth, destroying it as he goes.

Nevertheless, the guile of the serpent is no empty phrase, and the Biblical story of Eve and her resourceful tempter is doubtless profoundly symbolic of a long-forgotten racial experience in which the balance of nature came near being restored; in which event the astounding thing called civilization would never have come to pass. Not until the sun was low and the field empty of birds did the snake stir. Then he raised his battered head with infinite caution and, after satisfying himself that no enemies were in sight, slid rapidly away toward the kale field.

And the moral of the tale? In this little drama were involved three degenerate classes of a dying globe. I, the audience, watched the enfeebled actors largely through the medium of cold intelligence, that unique and comparatively new weapon which has won for the human animal his present supremacy, but which, in all probability, will ultimately accomplish his destruction. True, there flared up in me the slowly dying urge to kill, that fundamental instinct upon which evolution itself rests; but my simian-born curiosity, overgrown to the proportions of the scientific mind, stayed my hand.

That night, however, the elemental savage which still slumbers at the bottom of all of us reasserted himself, and in dreams I wrestled mightily with huge serpents that stole upon me with a low whispering of horrid scales out of an infernal and fathomless silence. Probably in that nightmare was unfolded the span of man's pre-human emotional life, covering its passage through the reptilian age.

Is terror, after all, man's richest and most fundamental experience?

THE BREAK IN THE CREDIT CHAIN

BY EDGAR LAWRENCE SMITH

THREE paragraphs in an agreement too often signed without thought have played a devastating rôle in recent stock-market history. They relate to the customer's borrowings from his stockbroker, pleasantly referred to as 'debit balances.'

The sum total of these debit balances furnished the flimsy scaffolding upon which stock quotations were lifted so far above rational investment values that they could only fall on any change in speculative sentiment. And it is on account of them, and the lack of real credit behind them, that the fall in stock prices, once commenced, was precipitate and could not be stopped until thousands of financial tragedies had occurred — tragedies affecting the life prospects of hundreds of thousands of individuals. These loans by brokers to their customers, made without regard to the customers' credit rating and without pretense of credit investigation, form the weakest link in our credit structure.

I

On the stage, the Mortgage on the Old Homestead played a familiar part in the melodramas and tragedies of a former day. In the tragedies of real

life to-day, the mortgage has been replaced by the much more highly efficient debit balance — efficient in its power to wipe out a man's financial standing without affording him recourse to any of the protections and safeguards against hasty action which are thrown about the borrower on mortgage.

Moreover, formalities of law, evidenced by documents and red seals, have firmly planted in our minds the idea that the condition of being a mortgagor is not one to be entered into lightly. It is understood by a majority who mortgage their homes that interest and payments to reduce the principal of the mortgage must be calculated ahead and made a part of the family budget, along with life insurance, clothing, groceries, meat, fish, and music lessons. A mortgage is solemnly contracted and plans for its repayment out of income are made in family council, for it is understood that if the mortgage is not paid the home is in jeopardy.

Likewise, when a man wishes to borrow from a bank, although the lending of money is the bank's largest source of profit, he will not find himself urged to borrow. In the well-conducted bank he will meet a counselor who will investigate the whole question of whether the loan is advisable, and if so, within what limits it should be kept, in order that it may be as happy a transaction in its termination as in its inception. In other words, the man's credit is appraised and a loan is made proportionate to his credit standing.

Banks rarely, if ever, make loans to people with whose affairs they are not reasonably familiar. And even in the case of a well-known customer, if the loan exceeds what would normally be expected to satisfy the ordinary requirements of his business, the bank will call for a special investigation, perhaps an engineer's or an auditor's report, before making advances. And further, when a loan is made the bank will insist that a direct promise to pay a definite sum of money be signed by the borrower, so there can be no question in the borrower's mind with regard to the amount and terms of his debt. This again is a sober business transaction, soberly entered into.

Not so with the debit balance and the agreement concerning it which is signed when an account is opened with a stock brokerage firm. A new customer enters the brokerage office with $25,000. He may or may not be known to a member of the firm. Perhaps he knows a 'customers' man' who is eager to report a new customer and to swell his record of commissions earned for the firm. The customers' man is delighted to see some real money. No question is raised even as to whether or not the money actually belongs to the customer. It may belong to his wife, his child, or, in a few unfortunate cases, to the bank where he is employed — situations that would come to light under credit investigation. But to the customers' man it is too often sufficient that the money is present and that it is the material out of which margins are made.

The discussion proceeds at once as to what may be a 'good buy.' In ordinary times, this may involve discussion of earning ratios and dividend records, but in the last year or so generalities and golden future prospects have been substituted, because the earning ratios did not account for the current quotations. The customer's own enthusiasm to participate in some of the 'easy money' which his friends have made and the youthful assurance of the customers' man are enough to result in an order involving $50,000 or perhaps $75,000, of which from $25,000 to

$50,000 must be borrowed by the customer. Is he asked to sign a note for $25,000 or $50,000, with a promise to repay it? Hardly, for in many cases the full realization of what he is doing would bring him part way back to his senses, and he would be unwilling to sign such a definite obligation. Commission business would suffer. Instead, 'as a matter of mere form,' the standard agreement relating to debit balances is presented for his signature.

Many who have suffered a tragic change of prospect as the result of having incurred a debit balance at their brokers' may not even now remember just what it was that they signed that put them in such jeopardy. So it is well to print below the three paragraphs in the standard form of the agreement which has brought so much trouble upon so many people. No lawyers were present when this agreement was signed, no red seals attached; no drama had forewarned them of the seriousness of their act, when they affixed their names; nor had any disagreeable questions been raised as to their capacity to protect themselves against the full force of the third paragraph, in case of need. The three fatal paragraphs run in part as follows: —

AGREEMENT OF . . . . . *Richard Roe*
WITH
X, Y, Z & COMPANY

In consideration of X, Y, Z & Company consenting to act as my brokers, and to carry for me securities on a debit balance, giving me credit service and/or affording me facilities for the transacting of business in securities, I hereby agree with them, as follows:

FIRST: [unimportant]

SECOND: I agree that X, Y, Z & Company may at any time, without prior notice to me, pledge any securities deposited by me with them, or purchased by them for me, or any part or portion of such securities, for the debit balance due thereon, or may pledge any or all of my said securities with other securities in a loan or loans for an amount greater than the debit balance due on my said securities . . .

THIRD: X, Y, Z & Company may, at any time, if my indebtedness or my obligations are not secured to their satisfaction, without notice or demand, sell at public or private sale, without advertising the securities or any portion thereof that they hold in my account . . .

How many have signed this agreement to their own and their family's irreparable harm?

The debt they incur, represented by an ever-growing debit balance on their brokers' books, has rarely any relation to their power to repay it. The hope of extricating themselves from debt, if in fact they fully realize that they are in debt, is founded upon the hope of selling the securities in their account upon a constantly rising stock market.

A stock market rising constantly at a rate greater than the steady growth of the country's investable surplus is without precedent and presupposes an endless chain of optimists forever ready to incur greater and greater debit balances at their respective brokers'. It further presupposes an inexhaustible reservoir of credit available to the broker. It presupposes, in fact, a combination of circumstances which is obviously absurd.

II

It is now evident that a serious thing has happened in the lives of a large number of individuals through a dangerously unguarded use of credit. If it had happened to a relatively small proportion of the community, it might not call for more than passing thought. But it has happened to a substantial portion of the community, and its effects will be felt eventually by almost all who do business in this

country and by many abroad. The normal flow of credit has been broken. The effectiveness of thousands of members of the community has been impaired.

Our civilization is based largely upon credit. Credit has become, in its various forms, the circulating medium of the country. It is the commodity in which banks deal. Through hundreds of years, banks have developed an experience enabling them in some measure to control the volume and to safeguard the quality of credit in use at any one time; to prevent it from being squandered and rendered valueless. They have learned that credit, to be a valid form of purchasing power, must be based on one of two things, either (1) *upon the competence, character, and earning power of the borrower*, or (2) *upon documents representing genuinely self-liquidating transactions.*

By self-liquidating transactions, we mean transactions which involve goods, services, or, in fact, securities which are in transit toward the ultimate consumer, user, or investor who will be able to pay for them in full without incurring a new debt.

The term 'banker' in its best sense implies a man who, through long training and experience in the affairs of men, has developed some degree of wisdom enabling him to form sound judgments with respect to the competence, character, and earning power of those to whom his bank is to extend credit, and to recognize the type of transaction which, under the conditions prevailing at the time a loan is made, will be genuinely self-liquidating. The community depends upon the fraternity of bankers to see to it that the credit of the community is not squandered, that it is sound in character and can be depended upon. And this is the function of the innumerable bankers who deal directly with the borrowing public. No Federal Reserve or other system can be devised to protect the *quality* of credit if the bankers throughout the country do not apply sound judgment in the making of each loan.

Broadly speaking, bankers have accepted this responsibility, but only as they have dealt directly with the final borrower. In the case of loans which they have made to brokers, secured by Stock Exchange collateral, they may have used some discretion in selecting the brokers to whom they were willing to loan. But the amount of the loan has been based almost entirely upon quotations on the Stock Exchange for the securities pledged. The final appraisal of the ultimate source of credit, namely, the power of the ultimate borrower to repay the loan, has been delegated in this class of transaction to the stockbroker. And it may be fairly said that hardly a brokerage office, if any, maintains a credit department.

Here we find a serious break in the credit chain; serious because of the enormous volume of brokers' credit which is put in circulation, running to a peak, as it did in September 1929, of over eight and a half billion dollars. This is the amount reported by the New York Stock Exchange as having been borrowed by its members alone. It does not include loans made by banks or others to brokers not members of the New York Stock Exchange. But without further addition or estimate it is a staggering volume of credit to be allowed to grow under an established practice which provides no adequate deterrent to its reckless use, no systematic investigation of the ultimate borrower's capacity to discharge his part of the total debt, and, in too many cases, no clear intimation to the ultimate borrower of the amount of his loan or of the serious nature of the obligation to pay which he has incurred.

The financial fallacy which underlies the creation of such a volume of loans and the manner in which they are created is evident to all who have made a study of the major influences which contribute to the creation of stock prices. There can be no doubt in the minds of those who have made such a study that the general level of stock quotations above a normal valuation is itself chiefly dependent upon the volume of brokers' loans. Certainly it becomes almost wholly dependent upon this factor when stock prices have risen to a point where they are obviously far above any possible current investment values represented by the stocks.

How unwise it is to base a substantial portion of the nation's credit upon the general level of stock prices, when those prices themselves are a function of the volume of the credit so granted, without introducing the credit standing of the ultimate borrower as a safeguard.

III

Out of the nation's income, a certain part is available for investment in securities, and there is evidence to show that this amount increases from year to year in an orderly fashion along with the growth of industry and the consequent need of industry for additional capital. On this basis, new investment capital to buy outright the securities offered by corporations in providing for their growing corporate needs is available without the introduction of any abnormally large amount of credit. Some credit, indeed, is needed, as it is in any business involving distribution. But no gigantic credit burden would ever be created if the effort were only to coördinate the capital needs of corporations with the growing investing power of the community.

The greater part of stockbrokers' loans to customers (in the form of debit balances) are made in the speculative hope that it will be possible for the customer to sell some of his securities to investors or to other speculators at a price higher than he paid for them. The hope is frequently justified in the early stages of a rising market, as more and more speculative buyers on credit are drawn in and the volume of loans to customers increases, while the general price level of stocks rises. Thus the appetite of the earlier speculators who have bought and sold out to later speculators is whetted by the profits they make, and they again enter, making larger commitments at a higher level. During the course of the process, some considerable volume of stock is distributed to bona fide investors; but to the extent that the investor pays more than what may be regarded as the normal investment value for these stocks, the investing power of the country is depleted more rapidly than it can be replaced. Consequently, toward the end of a long rise, both in brokers' loans and in stock prices, there are few investors left capable of buying stocks outright and removing securities from the market. Only those are left as possible purchasers who must create new debt if they are to buy at all.

The sum total, then, of the debt against stocks is no longer self-liquidating, and the amount of debt owed by each individual borrower bears no relation to his competence, character, and earning power. The quality of a great volume of credit is then found to bear no relation to sound banking standards. It is based solely upon fictitious stock quotations, themselves the result of the abnormal volume of debt created. The credit structure breaks at its weakest link, and thousands who suddenly find that they are in

debt beyond their means to repay are sold out.

It is all very well to say that the customers were foolish. As we suggested earlier, if only a small part of the population were affected, the matter might be passed over lightly. But when a system prevails which caters to the folly of too large a proportion of a population, a proportion so large that the destruction of its purchasing power is of concern to every business in the land, then it deserves serious attention.

Particularly is this true if stock quotations are to be used, not only as a basis of credit, but also as a basis upon which major financial transactions are undertaken. It will be well for the banking community, who are vitally interested in the maintenance of stable credit, thoroughly to investigate how valid stock quotations are, either as a basis of credit or as a basis for major intercorporate transactions. If they do this they will soon find that, under the present indiscriminate method of extending credit to brokers' customers, such quotations are without validity, and the principal reason that they are without validity is that the credit upon which they finally rest has never been really appraised. It has not been based either (1) upon the competence, character, and earning power of the ultimate borrower, or (2) upon documents representing genuinely self-liquidating transactions.

The collapse of the stock market in 1907 was attributed in large part to an inelastic currency and banking system, which resulted in an inadequate volume of credit and a shortage of actual cash. The lesson learned inspired the formation of the Federal Reserve System, which cured these particular weaknesses.

The fall in stock prices in 1920 and 1921 was attributed largely to the inflated inventories which had been accumulated during 1919, accompanied by a spectacular rise in commodity prices. Attention then was focused upon the use of credit in its relation to commodity prices and inventories. From this episode, business has learned a lesson, and in 1928 and 1929, as stock prices reached ever higher levels, great comfort was taken in the fact that corporate inventories were low, and that therefore there could be no danger in the situation.

Let us not forget the lessons learned from these two former experiences. But let us face the fact that, while in 1929 we had apparently no inflation in commodity prices, no accumulation of inventories, and, through the operation of the Federal Reserve System, abundant credit and currency, yet a fall in stock prices has occurred, exceeding in rapidity anything we have previously experienced. Let us focus our attention upon one of the causes, perhaps the principal cause of this unprecedented break: namely, a weak link in our credit structure — the fact that no proper credit investigations are made when stockbrokers make loans to their customers by means of the debit balance. These debit balances, to be a valid part of the security price structure which they support, should bear some relation to the borrower's power to repay the debt, whether or not stock quotations move in the direction he hopes they will. Let us find the means of applying to this form of credit standards which have been tested through centuries of banking practice.

ISLAM AND OURSELVES

BY ARNOLD J. TOYNBEE

I

I HAVE just been spending a month in traversing the Islamic World. I entered it at Adrianople; I left it at Basra. My route took me to Constantinople, Angora, Aleppo, Damascus, Baghdad, and Kerbela. I passed through the territories of three Islamic states — Turkey, Syria, and Iraq — and I skirted one corner of Persia. Of course my visit was brief, and I took only one cross section. To make a thorough survey, I ought to have gone on from Damascus to Egypt and Morocco and from Baghdad to Tehran and Samarkand. I ought to have given not a month but a year to the investigation. Still, even a glimpse tells one something — especially if one has had other glimpses before. At any rate, I have been able to feel the pulse of Islam once again as I have gone hurrying by in the course of this journey from England to Japan; and here on a British India mail boat, steaming down the Persian Gulf from Basra to Karachi, I have an opportunity to collect my thoughts and put them down on paper.

I will start with a general proposition. The several Islamic peoples that I have encountered are all trying to be Western — trying with all their might. But we must not flatter ourselves that they are adopting the ways of Western civilization because they are enamored of it. They do not really much like our ways; still less do they like ourselves. At the back of this astonishing metamorphosis there is, I fear, no love — nothing, for instance, that corresponds to the passion for Hellas and Hellenism that inspired and ennobled our Western Renaissance. The Muslims are Westernizing their life in a rather hard, matter-of-fact spirit and for rather prosaic reasons: because they have realized that they will go under if they do not do it, and because the thing is catching. You do not love chicken pox, but you catch it all the same and you endure the incubation philosophically. In this spirit these Muslim peoples are taking to sewing machines and automobiles.

So long as they possibly could, the Muslims held aloof from the West and took a sedate pleasure in their sense of superiority. 'Whizz, whizz, all by steam! Whirr, whirr, all by wheels!' as the Pasha expressed it to Kinglake. These restless inquisitive Franks might monkey very ingeniously with the works of the Creator, but they would not be able to change one jot or tittle of His decrees. And had He not decreed that Islam was the true faith and the Islamic community the Chosen People? The Unbelievers were playing their pranks on sufferance. In the sight of God, they were beyond the Pale. Dar al-Islam was the *orbis terrarum;* the Muslims were Mankind.

That attitude died hard in the Islamic World; but I believe it is stone-dead now; and though, if you looked in the right places, you could doubtless find some old-fashioned Islamic Fundamentalists still lingering on, you would also find that their influence was neg-

ligible. The vast majority of Muslims have succeeded in making a profound mental readjustment. They have perceived, at last, that while they have been looking on superciliously the Franks have made the planet their own and have laid the foundations of a world order which will develop, for good or evil, on the Western pattern. The Muslims have discovered with a shock that it is now they and not the Franks who are 'a peculiar people.' And since it is irksome and boring to be peculiar, when once you realize that you are, the Muslims are endeavoring to become as other men are, and not as that Pharisee, their former self.

This new craving to be ordinary — with our Western ordinariness as the norm — has expressed itself outwardly in a sweeping change of headgear; that is, of male headgear, for I shall come to the question of women's dress in a moment. In Turkey, the Ghazi has simply put a ban on the old headgear — the red felt fez or the black sheepskin kalpak — and has ordained that every male citizen of the republic must wear a hat with a brim, the cut and color being left to the individual's free choice. In Persia, Riza Shah Pehlevi has not only banned the old sugarloaf-shaped felt *kulah*, which the Persians have worn since they first left a sculptured record of themselves in the fifth century B.C.; he has further compelled them to wear, instead, a 'Pehlevi hat,' which is neither more nor less than a French officer's kepi. You can have it blue-black or you can have it sandy brown, but that is the only choice that is allowed you. Finally, in Iraq, King Faysal has instituted the 'Faysal cap,' which is a version of the forage cap worn in the American and British armies, in two alternative colors — khaki or dark blue. The Faysal cap is not compulsory; but in the towns of Iraq to-day you seldom see a fez. Of course the tribesmen — whether Bedouins or fellahin — still wear the traditional Arab headdress, which suits their environment to a nicety: the woolen headcloth, kept in place by thick woolen coils.

The interesting point is that this is an exact reversal of the conventions in dress that prevailed in Islamic countries until recently. In Turkey, for instance, before 1925, a man of fashion would wear a suit of the latest Western cut, so that, when you met him bareheaded, he might, for all you knew, be your own fellow countryman; but for headgear he kept rigorously to the fez, as if to show you that there were definite limits beyond which he declined to go along the path of imitation. He might clap on a hat when he crossed the frontier by train or went on board a steamer; but you would find him in his fez again when he was in the act of reëntering his native land. Nowadays, the convention is just the opposite. Your Persian, for instance, is free below the neck. He may still wear a cotton nightgown from neck to ankles (though I fancy that such conservatism is not well looked upon). But his head must be crowned with a Pehlevi hat, or the police will be after him. The fact is that, in the East, all headgear is intensely symbolic, and the symbolism of the new-model headgear is this, if I rightly interpret it. When the Pehlevi hat or the Faysal cap or the Turkish Homburg passes your Frankish sun helmet in the street, it signals: 'My wearer is as good a man as yours, and he is going to stand on his rights from now onward! You will see!'

II

What are these rights which the Muslim peoples are claiming? For after all the mere cult of ordinariness, though it may carry one a long way,

can hardly account for the whole of this immense upheaval that we are witnessing. The right which exercises the minds of Muslims just now is one which is fundamental in our Western scheme of life: the right to independence. In the name of all our Western prophets and apostles and martyrs of liberty, the Muslims are demanding independence from — ourselves. And they are demanding it on at least three planes: the political, the social, and the economic.

On the political plane, the victory is already substantially won, and one is amazed at the greatness of it when one remembers the political prostration of these nations ten or twelve years ago, just before and just after the Armistice. In 1919, Iraq was being governed (I believe, very well) by British administrators. Persia was having the pleasure of being swallowed whole by the British Empire — a reprieve from her previous destiny, when she had been condemned to be cut up alive in order to be divided equitably between the British and the Russians. As for Turkey, the Straits were occupied by the Allied fleets and Smyrna by the Greeks; and what the Greeks did not take in Anatolia was earmarked to provide two 'zones of special influence' for France and Italy. What a change in ten years! To-day, both Turkey and Persia are politically independent in absolute fact as well as in theory. Their territories are clear of foreign troops and they have successfully repudiated those ancient servitudes, the Capitulations. In Iraq, the British administrators (taught by the experience of the insurrection of 1920) have transformed themselves into an Arab National Government, which looks forward to attaining the status of complete sovereign independence through being admitted to membership in the League of Nations. At this moment, it looks as though Egypt, too, were at last within reach of the same goal. And these are the leading countries of the Islamic World.

Of course there are exceptions. In Northwest Africa, for instance, it looks (though appearances may be deceptive) as though the struggle for political liberty which was started nearly a century ago by Abd al-Kadir had ended in failure with the collapse of Abd al-Karim in 1926. Northwest Africa is on the periphery of the Islamic World; but that cannot be said of Palestine and Syria. Of Palestine I cannot speak, since I have not been there, either on this journey or before. I simply came across the wave of unrest which the Palestinian troubles were producing, a week or two ago, in Aleppo and Baghdad. I did see something of Syria; and there I found the exception which seems to prove the rule. Syria was the one Islamic country through which I passed that reminded me of the old Ottoman Empire. In Syria, one's spirits are still oppressed by that atmosphere of helplessness and hopelessness which the neighboring peoples have thrown off by such a remarkable effort of will. The blame must be apportioned between the map makers who condemned Syria to strangulation by drawing her present frontiers and the officials who have been administering the French mandate since those frontiers were drawn.

The upshot is that Syria is Ottoman still — for evil and not for good. And her paralysis is faithfully symbolized in the headgear of her people; for, when you pass into Syria out of behatted Turkey, you are startled to find the Syrians still wearing the fez. I interpret their conservatism in this way. The new Turkish and Persian and Iraqi hats are symbols of being master in one's own house. One clothes one's head like a Westerner because one has

successfully asserted one's right to look him in the face and meet him as an equal. But the Syrians have not yet asserted that right. In 1925, they made a desperate attempt to drive the French out, and they failed. In Syria, the Westerners are still the masters; and all that the Syrians can do is to intimate that, although they have been beaten, they remain unreconciled. I fancy this is the message which every Syrian fez signals to every French officer in the army of occupation — if the Frenchman has eyes to see.

Another symptom of discouragement in Syria is that the Syrian women have reverted to the veil, though I am told that during the war, when Syria was still part of the Ottoman Empire, they had begun to discard the veil like their Turkish sisters. In Turkey, of course, the veil has now almost completely disappeared, and, with it, that relation between women and men which the veil implied. The change in the position of women in Turkey is, I am convinced, both genuine and profound; and although at present there is little sign that the Syrians, Iraqis, and Persians are following the Turkish lead in this matter, I feel confident that, in time, this great emancipation, which is now an accomplished fact in one Islamic country, will spread throughout the Islamic World. And this is a greater step toward true independence than abolishing the Capitulations or even than driving foreign invaders beyond the frontier.

It is interesting to notice that in Turkey the process of Westernization has been much more spontaneous among the women than among the men. The men have been dragooned into wearing hats and have submitted. The women have merely received permission from the authorities to discard the veil and to wear whatever headdress they choose. On one or two occasions when the authorities have attempted to dragoon the women, too, the women have taken steps to show that they value asserting their liberty even more than being in the fashion; and, in each of these trials of strength, the authorities have got the worst of it. At present, the vast majority of Turkish women have discarded the veil without putting on the hat. Hats are expensive and they are ugly. So the Turkish women very sensibly continue to wear the *charshaf* — the black, madonna-like coif or wimple which was the universal headdress of all women, in Dar al-Islam and in Christendom alike, not so many centuries ago. The Turkish women are steadily moving forward, but they are choosing their own pace, and they do not seem to be succumbing to that revolutionary frenzy which rejects the old and adopts the new on principle, without discrimination. Among the men who control the destinies of Turkey to-day, a certain streak of this inverted fanaticism is discernible. The more calm and liberal temper of the women is a valuable antidote. The women may still save Turkey from the setbacks to which revolutions are notoriously subject when the revolutionaries move too fast. The achievement of social independence is the women's task.

III

But if independence is to be complete, it must be achieved not only on social and political planes but on the economic plane as well; and it is greatly to the credit of the Ghazi that he set to work on this task as far back as 1923, immediately after the Turkish War of Liberation against the Greeks and the principal Allied Powers had been won. Moreover, the Ghazi has encouraged economic regeneration by example as well as by precept; and he has avoided

the common mistake of ignoring agriculture, which in all these countries must remain the basic industry for a long time to come. On the outskirts of Angora, the Ghazi has established a model farm; and similarly, on the outskirts of Baghdad, King Faysal has established a model cotton plantation. This is one of the greatest services that either ruler could render to his country.

A sign of the times is the activity of the Turkish and Persian Governments in building railways. (The Iraq Government is in the fortunate position of having had the essential skeleton of a railway system constructed for it by the British Army during the Great War. The network is now being completed by the extension to Mosul of the line that already runs from Baghdad to Kirkuk). The Ghazi found the whole northeastern half of the territory of the Turkish Republic unequipped with railways — the reason being that, before the war, the Imperial Russian Government had imposed a permanent veto upon railway construction in those Ottoman provinces, on the ground that it would threaten Russian military security in Transcaucasia! This deficiency is now being remedied as rapidly as possible. A new line has already been built from Angora to Cæsarea, and this is to be extended to Sivas and Erzerum. Another line is being carried southward from the Black Sea port of Samsun in order to open up the tobacco-growing districts round Amasia.

As for Riza Shah Pehlevi, when he took control of the destinies of Persia he found, I believe, no railways in existence at all except a five-mile tramway between Tehran and a suburban shrine, and a fragment of track, between Tabriz and the Russian frontier, which linked up the second city of the Persian Empire, not with other parts of Persia, but with Transcaucasia — in other words, with the Soviet Union. The Shah has now embarked on the ambitious project of building a Trans-Persian Railway from Khor Musa, an estuary at the head of the Persian Gulf, to Bandar Gaz, a port at the southeast corner of the Caspian. The supervision of the work has been entrusted to American engineers (I have mentioned in another article that I traveled from Damascus to Baghdad in the company of one of them, who was on his way to Ahwaz).

Outsiders have criticized this undertaking on various grounds. The route that has been chosen misses, they say, most of the important centres of population and production; to carry the railway over the mountains of Luristan toward one end and over Elbruz toward the other will be very expensive; and neither the Caspian nor the Persian Gulf is any longer the natural outlet and inlet for the trade of Persia. In this era of trans-desert motor transport, they say, the right policy for the Persian Government would be to concentrate all its energies upon opening up routes to the Mediterranean — the gateway to the markets of Europe and America. The Persians reply that these criticisms miss the point. The Trans-Persian Railway, as planned, may not be the most profitable way of opening up Persia if the problem is considered exclusively from the economic point of view; but in Persian minds the primary function of the railway is to promote the independence of the country. On the trans-desert route to the Mediterranean, they would have to traverse the territories of two foreign countries, Iraq and Syria, which would have the trade of Persia at their mercy if its flow were to be directed along that line. As it is, Persian trade is at the mercy of Iraq in the Shatt al-Arab; for the whole breadth of the Shatt is Iraqi territorial waters up to low-water mark on the Persian side, so that the Persian port of

Muhammerah, at the junction of the Shatt with the Persian river Karun, has no direct communication with the open sea. The point of the Trans-Persian Railway is that the southern terminus, Khor Musa, is a port on the open sea which lies wholly within Persian territory and under Persian control. The sea may be the wrong sea from the mere economic standpoint; but from the standpoint of independence, that is a trifle!

The sincerity and the strength of this passion for independence may be gauged by the fact that both the Turkish and the Persian Governments are making a heroic attempt to build all these railways without borrowing foreign capital. Financially, this heroism is akin to folly. It is practically unheard of that such poor and undeveloped countries should be able to execute ambitious railway-building schemes out of current income. The common-sense course, in an undeveloped country with latent natural resources, is to build on credit and eventually pay off the debt as the new railways produce their effect in developing the wealth of the country. This has been the history of railway building in the United States, in Canada, in the Argentine. But then the people of these countries were not obsessed by an almost morbid fear that the foreign capitalist would make himself master of their country and take their independence away. This fear does obsess the Turkish and the Persian mind; and when one recalls the history of the financial relations between Islamic governments and Western capitalists during the past century, one is forced to admit that there is some justification for apprehensiveness. 'Once bitten, twice shy.' These Islamic countries do want capital, but they want independence more; and therefore, at present, they insist on imposing conditions upon the import of foreign capital which the capitalists find intolerable.

'Do you suppose that we are going to put money into your wretched country on these conditions?' they ask with indignation. 'Why, the whole of tropical Africa lies open to us and the whole of Latin America. Good-morning, gentlemen. And next time you want capital, apply elsewhere!' But the Turks and Persians are not moved by such expostulations. Politely, they bow the foreign capitalists out, and congratulate themselves on having been firm enough to refrain from putting themselves in their power. Development is good, but independence is better; so, if it is a choice, development must take its chance.

IV

This is an impasse which may retard the economic progress of the Islamic World for many years. It is difficult to see a way out; for the standpoints of your foreign capitalists and your Islamic government are very wide apart; and, from their respective standpoints, they are each amply justified in taking an intransigent line toward the other.

But there is an insidious factor at work which may eventually break the impasse down. Under the blandishments of salesmanship, the Muslim peoples are going the way of the rest of the world. They are beginning to develop new and expensive wants. Let us move from this writing desk in the lounge into the smoking room, and peer down through the windows at our fellow passengers traveling third class on the foredeck. There they are, apparently making the voyage in the traditional fashion. The steamship company takes fifteen rupees from them per head (from us, 274!) for the journey from Basra to Karachi; gives them water to drink and an awning to

shelter them from the fury of the sun; and that is all. For the rest, they must fend for themselves, finding their own food and cooking it on deck as best they may.

Look at that old man in spectacles, lying sound asleep on the boards without even a piece of matting under him. Surely his wants are infinitesimal? Yes, but wait a moment. Let us look more closely; for, perhaps, the old man is no longer entirely typical. Look, for example, at that Indian family — husband, wife, and one little boy — who are camped a few feet away from him. They are traveling with an iron bedstead and a deck chair. And what is this that comes trundling round the corner of that pile of baggage, where three graybeards are making coffee over a spirit lamp? It is a little brown child on a toy tricycle. And that brazen note that beats upon our ears from the foot of the ladder that leads up to the fo'c'sle? I am blessed if it is n't a gramophone. Yes, even here the insinuating arts of Western salesmanship are making headway. These simple people, who used all to live like the birds of the air, or like that sleeping old man, are acquiring the taste for expensive toys; and one can foresee what is likely to follow. To buy they must pay; to pay they must produce; to produce they must lay out capital; and to find capital in any quantity that counts they must look abroad. There are forces at work here which will assuredly bring Muslim governments and Western capitalists together in the long run.

These third-class passengers are mostly (though not exclusively) humble people. The greater folk are buying not only bedsteads and gramophones, but cars. The provincial governor who entertained me at one country town in Iraq drove his own car — an Americanism that would have shocked his predecessor under the old Ottoman dispensation! A tribal shaykh, with whom I took lunch in his little mud castle, had a chauffeur. And I am told that the chiefs of the desert tribes now have themselves driven majestically from pasturage to pasturage — at the head of their menservants and their maidservants and their wives and their children and their flocks and their herds — in motor cars. Hitherto the caravans of camels, traveling in single file, roped head to tail, have submitted to being led by a donkey. I should not be surprised to hear that they were now threatening to strike unless the donkey were replaced by something at least as up to date as an old Ford. This is conjecture, but I can testify that, throughout the Islamic countries which I have been traversing, one sees cars plying for hire in almost every village and the common people riding in them — disdaining the snail-like pace of oxcarts and arabas.

At this point, the toy turns into an effective source of economic productivity; for when cars come to be used to this extent it means that the whole standard of traveling and transportation is being raised; and this is another way of saying that one of the most important stimuli of production is being 'tuned up.'

In Iraq, the next most conspicuous new want, after the demand for motor cars, is the demand for pumps, driven by oil engines, in order to lift the water from the Tigris and the Euphrates on to the fields. At this moment, the importation of these pumps is increasing rapidly, and the area of cultivation is expected to extend in proportion. . . .

Yes, the meshes of our economic net are entangling them. They are being drawn into our vast world-wide system of production and consumption. They are being Westernized in every limb and every organ — except the heart.

Their hearts are still far from us. I

felt it all the time, but perhaps most acutely when I was talking to that quiet and kindly officer of the Iraq Police Force who was doing me the honors in a certain celebrated holy city. I had no Arabic and he no English; so, rather tentatively, I opened the conversation in Turkish, wondering whether it was quite tactful to address him in the language of the ancient oppressor from whose yoke his country had been liberated twelve years ago by British arms. As the first Turkish word fell timidly from my lips, his face lighted up. 'Speak Turkish? I should just think so' — and he beamed. 'Why, I was in the Turkish service before the war. I served everywhere. In Istanbol — that is one of the great cities of the world. In Salonik — the Turks had made a really European city there, really modern, with quays and trams. Afterward I had a glimpse of Europe. I went to Brindisi in Italy. And I saw that the city which the Europeans had made at Brindisi was a poor thing compared with the city that the Turks had made at Salonik.' 'Then perhaps you came from Turkey-in-Europe, or at any rate from Anatolia? You speak Turkish so fluently.' 'Oh no, I am a Baghdadi.'

Being a Baghdadi, my friend had taken service first with the British and then with the new Iraq Government after Iraq had been separated from Turkey for good and all. In this stage of his career, he had won the British Military Cross. In the previous stage, when he was fighting against the British during the Great War, he had received the Iron Cross from the Germans! And of course he had Turkish decorations as well. Like a good soldier, he had served one master at a time and each of them faithfully. He was evidently not discontented with the present régime. Probably his reason told him that Iraq was better off as an independent state than she had been as a pair of outlying and rather neglected Ottoman provinces. And I think, from what I saw of his relations with the local British police inspector, that he was also intelligent enough to realize the necessity for a temporary course of British tutelage if Iraq was to stand on her own feet in the end. But his reason and his heart spoke with different voices. When he was talking his native Arabic, no sense of national pride seemed to be evoked in him. It was the sound of Turkish that brought the light into his eyes; and, in spite of those British and German decorations, it was his Turkish service that was the romance of his life.

What had the Turks done to secure this extraordinary hold upon his affections? Knowing my Turks, I knew that they had done nothing intentionally. The Turks exert themselves to make a Baghdadi policeman love them? The mere suggestion was ludicrous. No, that was not it. It was the story of Brindisi and Salonika that supplied the key. What the Turks had done for my Baghdadi friend was this: they had made him feel that — in one case, at least, which he had seen with his own eyes — an Islamic nation had beaten a Western nation at the Franks' own game of material efficiency. Salonika better than Brindisi! That was balm to Muslim eyes, and to Muslim sensibilities. The Turks had done for him a great thing indeed. They had given him confidence in the power of the Islamic peoples to hold their own. They had helped him to look Western civilization in the face and hold up his head. Though they had slain him (and they would have done it for a trifle), I think he would have loved them still.

The startling discovery of letters so intimately connected with one of the most interesting and moving dramas of literary history leads us to remake this number of the Atlantic *at the moment of going to press. Our readers will recall that they owe to Dr. Hotson the true story of the death of Marlowe (see the* Atlantic *for July 1926). This latest* trouvaille *must take its place among the supreme rewards of original and intelligent literary research. — The Editor*

SHELLEY'S LOST LETTERS TO HARRIET

BY LESLIE HOTSON

I

So much controversial ink, all too often from partisan pens, has been poured out on Shelley's marital difficulties that one would be glad to let the subject rest. The reader who cares enough for truth to have stepped behind the pages of defamer and whitewasher alike and scanned the original evidence for himself will have formed his own opinion. He will agree that Shelley incurred his measure of blame not so much by separating himself from Harriet as by yielding in the first place to the chivalrous and sentimental folly of his nineteen years and marrying her. Not less will the reader agree that such blame, whatever be its amount, has been long outweighed in any fair mind by the signal nobility, constancy, and generosity of his life taken as a whole.

'If you were my friend,' wrote Shelley, six years after the separation, to Southey, who had presumed to condemn him for the tragic death of Harriet, 'I could tell you a history that would make you open your eyes; but I shall certainly never make the public my familiar confidant.' The public of 1820 knew him only as an outcast to be abhorred and abused. A century of change has made the public sufficiently his friend to hear him with a degree of sympathy and understanding. Simple justice to his memory, moreover, demands the production of all available evidence that can lead to a clearer view of Shelley's mind at this chief turning point in his life.

Up to the present, only one letter from Shelley to Harriet has been known to the world. To this, by reason of a fortunate discovery, I can now add nine more, written between July 14 and October 25, 1814; and, finally, a letter dated December 18, 1816, written to Eliza Westbrook shortly after her sister Harriet's suicide.

Before we come to the text of the letters, several queries must be answered. Where, it will be asked, have these letters been hidden away these hundred years? Why have they not been found before this? And how did I come to discover them?

In the first place, it will be remembered that after Harriet's death, in 1816, the Westbrooks instituted proceedings in the Court of Chancery with a view to combating Shelley's claim to the custody of his motherless children, little Ianthe and Charles. For this purpose they submitted evidence which they regarded as damaging to Shelley's character. But since the hearing was held behind closed doors, and Lord

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Chancellor Eldon forbade any public report of the proceedings, the details of the nature of the Westbrooks' exhibits remained a secret.

In 1860, more than forty years after the Chancery case, Shelley's friend and executor, Thomas Love Peacock, was seeking evidence to corroborate his personal recollection of the manner of Shelley's separation from Harriet. To this end he caused a search to be made in the Record Office for documents in the case of *Shelley* v. *Westbrooke*. He was rewarded by the discovery of an affidavit of Eliza Westbrook which revealed that the secret evidence already mentioned included ten letters written by Shelley. On January 10, 1817, Eliza Westbrook 'maketh oath and saith . . . that she hath looked upon certain paper Writings now produced and shewn to her at the time of swearing this her Affidavit and marked respectively 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. That the said Paper Writings are all of the Handwriting of the said Defendant Percy Bysshe Shelley and were respectively addressed by him to Harriet his late Wife deceased the sister of this Deponent. . . . That she hath looked upon a certain other paper Writing . . . marked 10. That the same Paper Writing is of the Handwriting of the said Defendant Percy Bysshe Shelley.'

Suspecting the probable importance of these mysterious letters, Peacock redoubled his efforts to discover their whereabouts, but with no result. His supplementary article on Shelley, published in *Fraser's Magazine* in March 1862, owed its belated appearance, as he tells us, to his tenacious hope of recovering the lost letters.

Twenty years after this, Godwin's biographer, Kegan Paul, attacked the problem afresh, in the interests of Professor Dowden, who was then preparing his two-volume *Life* of Shelley. Paul succeeded in obtaining some documents, but the ten letters eluded him as they had eluded Peacock.

No one knows how many later students have attempted the solution of this major mystery in the Public Records; but every inquiry at the Record Office would naturally be met by the statement that it is not the practice of the Court of Chancery to file exhibits. The original letters, the property of the Westbrooks, were in all probability returned to their solicitors, Messrs. Desse, Dendy, and Morphett, and have not been heard of since.

Yet, although the originals have vanished, no one seems to have realized that certified Public Record copies might have been preserved for the use of counsel and of Mr. William Alexander, the officer to whom the Chancellor referred certain matters of the cause for report. If Mr. Alexander did not destroy those copies, where might they be found?

Among the obscurer records of the Chancery there is preserved a series of documents, little known and less used, called Masters' Papers: officially described as consisting of 'The Evidence, as Affidavits, Examinations of Witnesses, Accounts, and other documents on which the Master founded his Report, together with the Drafts of the said Reports.'

It was in searching the indexes of this series, while engaged on a quest far removed from Shelley, but one which had led me further and further into the unexplored corners of Chancery, that my eye fell upon the entry, *Shelley* v. *Westbrooke*. Since the Masters' Papers are quite distinct from the files of Proceedings in which the petition, answers, and affidavits in the case had been discovered, it seemed likely that this further source had escaped search. Here might possibly be found the lost letters of Shelley. I was not slow in

making out a ticket of application for the documents.

A bundle was brought out, covered thick with black dust. To all appearances, the *dossier* had not been opened since it was tied up in red tape more than a hundred years ago. At the bottom of a heap of affidavits and other original papers in the Shelley case, I came upon the quarry: a file of twelve large folio sheets with the superscription, *Shelley* v. *Westbrooke. Mr. Shelley's Letters referred to in the Affidavit of the Defendant Elizabeth Westbrook.*

Though the copies were perfectly clear, I found it difficult at the moment to read these letters. Before me lay the undiscovered evidence, so long and so ardently sought. What might such letters not contain? Eagerness to know their secrets, and the fear of finding out too little or too much, made the words swim before my eyes. With an effort, I read them through. To one immersed in the moveless atmosphere of legal form and ancient record it was painfully startling to be thrown on a sudden into the midst of this the greatest convulsion of Shelley's sensitive nature.

Another momentary obstacle in the path of clear understanding arose from the discovery that the letters, some of which were undated, had not been arranged in their proper order. For example, while Letter Number 1 was dated September 15, 1814, the contents of Letter Number 2 (undated) showed that it belonged to July 14, a date two months before Number 1. Fortunately, however, it is not difficult to assign dates to the undated with some degree of certainty.

Publication of these letters presents a curious problem. Properly, they should be read in their places in the body of Shelley's letters, where, in the future, they will be found. All I can hope to do here is to furnish a necessarily imperfect introduction and comment.

II

The earliest letter of the series to Harriet — July 14, 1814 — is of the deepest interest, and demands a brief recollection of the events which led up to it; and, in the first place, of Shelley's marriage with Harriet.

On his expulsion from Oxford for 'atheism,' and at odds with his horrified father, Shelley came up to London. His sisters, Mary and Hellen, were at school near by, in Clapham. Through them he became acquainted with their friend Harriet Westbrook, daughter of a well-to-do retired coffeehouse keeper. She was sixteen, and easily the prettiest girl at Miss Fenning's school. Peacock describes her: 'She had a good figure, light, active, and graceful. Her hair was light brown, and dressed with taste and simplicity. In her dress she was truly *simplex munditiis*. Her complexion was beautifully transparent; the tint of the blush rose shining through the lily. The tone of her voice was pleasant; her speech the essence of frankness and cordiality; her spirits always cheerful; her laugh spontaneous, hearty, and joyous. She was well educated. She read agreeably and intelligently. She wrote only letters, but she wrote them well. Her manners were good; and her whole aspect and demeanor such manifest emanations of pure and truthful nature, that to be once in her company was to know her thoroughly.'

Such, considered by the favorable observer, was Harriet. But unfortunately, as Shelley discovered only too late, she could not be considered by herself. From her childhood she had been under the care of her elder sister, Eliza, a woman almost old enough to be her mother. The result of this

training was that her thoughts and desires were completely subject to the control of this sister-and-director, to whom she was blindly devoted.

Eliza promptly saw in young Bysshe Shelley the heir to a great estate, and set about making a match for little Harriet. Already attracted by her beauty, Shelley found his quick sympathies further engaged by Harriet's unhappiness under the 'tyranny' of her father, who obliged her to continue at the school, which she had grown to dislike.

To an eye less discerning than Eliza's, Shelley's Godwinian detestation of the slavish institution of marriage might well have loomed as a real obstacle. 'For God's sake,' he had written to Hogg in a discussion of matrimonialism, 'if you want more argument, read the marriage service before you *think* of allowing an amiable, beloved female to submit to such degradation.' Undismayed by such talk, Eliza permitted Harriet, after an acquaintance of some months, to fall in love with the desirable youth, and to propose elopement.

From Wales, a few days after assuring Hogg that he was *not* in love with Harriet, Shelley writes: —

> I shall certainly come to York, but *Harriet Westbrook* will decide whether now or in three weeks. Her father has persecuted her in a most horrible way, by endeavouring to compel her to go to school. She asked my advice: resistance was the answer. . . . She wrote to say that resistance was useless, but that she would fly with me, and threw herself upon my protection. We shall have £200 a year: when we find it run short, we must live, I suppose, upon Love! Gratitude and admiration all demand that I should love her *for ever*. We shall see you at York. I will hear your arguments for matrimonialism, by which I am now almost convinced.

Some months after writing this letter, he confided to Elizabeth Hitchener that suicide had been a favorite theme of Harriet's letters to him, and that they became more and more gloomy. 'At length one assumed a tone of such despair as induced me to quit Wales precipitately.'

Within a few days after his arrival in London, he writes to Hogg: 'Harriet is yet undecided, not with respect to me, but herself. . . . I am become a perfect convert to matrimony . . . [persuaded that] the sacrifice made by the woman [in an extra-marital union] is so disproportionate to any which the man can give.' When Shelley had arrived at this state of mind, acceptable to Eliza, Harriet's decision soon followed. At the end of August, 1811, they eloped and were married in Edinburgh. After a brief interval of happiness, Harriet sent for her indispensable Eliza, who not only came, but stayed.

The two years of married life which followed were the happiest years of Harriet's existence. She had now not merely her Eliza, but a husband and, in due time, a baby as well. Her father no longer obliged her to go to school. She traveled about the British Isles with her companions, and enjoyed the change of scene to the full.

But for Shelley the winter of 1813–1814 and the succeeding spring brought a crisis of profound unhappiness. His unbelievably quixotic attempts at political reform had failed wretchedly. In a barren pursuit of Reason he had exiled himself from nature and poetry. Less fortunate than the knights of romance, he had lived to see that his hasty carrying off of the oppressed, enamored, and sixteen-year-old Harriet had been a tragic mistake. Their relation could never have survived as a true marriage of minds; never, even if Eliza had not added her weight to their frail matrimonial skiff. To compensate for the want of passionate feeling between them, Shelley's fantastic plan

had been to make of the daughter of the coffeehouse keeper an intellectual comrade. Here, too, he met with utter failure. Although she could never have understood his attitude toward formal religion, an unfettered Harriet might have echoed his revolutionary political formulas with an undivided attention; but after the baby Ianthe had come it was clearly hopeless to expect the young mother to carry on her rôle of philosophical neophyte.

As early as the summer of 1813, a growing discouragement and hunger of the mind had driven Shelley to seek out new friends. A Mr. Turner, who had introduced him to the philosophy of vegetarianism, now went further and made him acquainted with his wife, Cornelia, and her mother, Mrs. Boinville. Charming, cultivated, and sentimental, these ladies took their chief delight in turning their house, first in London and afterward in Bracknell, into a centre for Godwinian theorizing and literary studies. Shelley, a brilliant planet among the muddy glimmerings of their commonplace satellites, was warmly welcomed. To begin the study of *belles-lettres* with those who sympathized with his philosophical and political notions was to bridge the gap between the old Shelley and the new.

Peacock, the devoted scholar, had certainly the largest part in guiding his friend out of the lunar desert of the worship of Reason and into the field of classical letters. Yet the genial influence of the Boinvilles' interest in Tasso and Petrarch must be allowed to have led him to the literature of the Renaissance. And when, at the summer's end, Shelley took his little family north to spend the autumn in Edinburgh, he entered on an intense period of reading. His study of Homer marks the first dim movements of his soul before waking from a nightmare of futile political action into the full life of poetry.

III

In this fateful winter and spring there is very little direct evidence of the progress of the estrangement between Shelley and Harriet. It is clear enough, however, that Eliza's presence made home a misery for Shelley; that his efforts to dislodge her were met by dogged resistance on Harriet's part. The folly of insisting on Eliza's company was not apparent to her. Painful contention ended in Shelley's defeat, and, under Eliza's influence, in altered behavior in his wife.

After returning to London in December, as early as February he had gone to live at Bracknell with the Boinvilles. Here, in spite of the kindness that he found and the delight he took in his renewed studies of Italian, he was deeply unhappy. The struggles of his spirit had reduced him to the dejection which appears unmistakably in the following passages to Hogg, written on March 16.

> My friend, you are happier than I. You have the pleasures as well as the pains of sensibility. I have sunk into a premature old age of exhaustion, which renders me dead to everything, but the unenviable capacity of indulging the vanity of hope, and a terrible susceptibility to objects of disgust and hatred.
>
> My temporal concerns are slowly rectifying themselves; I am astonished at my own indifference to their event. I live here like the insect that sports in a transient sunbeam, which the next cloud shall obscure for ever. I am much changed from what I was. . . .
>
> Eliza is still with us — not here! — but will be with me when the infinite malice of destiny forces me to depart. I am now but little inclined to contest this point. I certainly hate her with all my heart and soul. It is a sight which awakens an inexpressible sensation of disgust and horror, to see her caress my poor little Ianthe, in whom I may hereafter find the consolation of sympathy. I sometimes feel faint with

the fatigue of checking the overflowings of my unbounded abhorrence for this miserable wretch.

On March 24, as doubts had arisen of the validity in England of their marriage in Scotland, Shelley and Harriet were married again, in London. This act has been gratuitously interpreted on the one hand as an indication that Shelley was in love with Harriet and on the other as a scheme of his to assure the legitimacy of a possible heir. No one has shown it to be more than a simple affirmation of Harriet's position in the eyes of the law. In April they seem to have tried unsuccessfully to live together again; but by the middle of the month, when Eliza too late disencumbered the household of her presence, the estrangement had deepened. Harriet had lost the little interest she had ever taken in Shelley's intellectual pursuits, and he no longer attempted to stimulate her mind.

There is no reason to suppose that Harriet could realize the hopelessness of the situation; but for Shelley the pain of double failure and the self-reproach at the folly of his ill-considered marriage were a suffering which no anodynes of pleasant society and study could alleviate.

He was called, in the early part of May, from his retreat at Bracknell to London. Godwin, the theoretical revolutionary, had got himself deep into debt, and demanded pecuniary aid of his valuable young admirer. Although himself in need of money, Shelley devoted his energies with characteristic generosity to the task of mortgaging his future property for the benefit of the indigent philosopher.

From London Shelley addressed touching verses to Harriet entreating her love and a reconciliation of their differences. Despair leads him to the thought of self-destruction: —

> In mercy let him not endure
> The misery of a fatal cure.

And he closes with a last appeal: —

> O trust for once no erring guide!
> Bid the remorseless feeling flee;
> 'T is malice, 't is revenge, 't is pride,
> 'T is anything but thee;
> O deign a nobler pride to prove,
> And pity if thou canst not love.

His loneliness in Harriet's cold withdrawal of sympathy is only too apparent. The marriage had been built upon Harriet's love for him. If that had proved changeable and subject to the guidance of another mind, what was left?

It was while he was a prey to despair, and endeavoring to distract his mind with repeated interviews with Godwin about money, that Shelley first saw the sixteen-year-old Mary, Godwin's daughter by his first wife, Mary Wollstonecraft. This remarkable girl combined every quality, except a physical beauty equal to Harriet's, that could render her irresistible to Shelley. Her mind, intense, enthusiastic, and original, was controlled by an emotional nature powerful and sensitive to the verge of morbidity. More than this, she shared not only his love of poetry but his revolutionary ideas and his passion for study as well. Hogg's graphic picture of her and Shelley in Godwin's bookshop in Skinner Street is memorable: —

> He continued his uneasy promenade; and I stood reading the names of old English authors on the backs of the venerable volumes, when the door was partially and softly opened. A thrilling voice called, 'Shelley!' A thrilling voice answered, 'Mary!' And he darted out of the room like an arrow from the bow of the far-shooting king. A very young female, fair and fair-haired, pale indeed, and with a piercing look, wearing a frock of tartan, an unusual dress in London at that time, had called him out of the room. He was absent a

very short time — a minute or two; and then returned. 'Godwin is out; there is no use in waiting.' So we continued our walk along Holborn.

'Who was that, pray?' I asked; 'a daughter?'

'Yes.'

'A daughter of William Godwin?'

'The daughter of Godwin and Mary.'

Meetings followed, often in the churchyard of Old St. Pancras, by the tomb of Mary Wollstonecraft. Mutual attraction grew to passion, passion to a whirlwind. Imbued with her father's theories against marriage and the memory of her own mother's extra-marital union, Mary found little to hinder her avowal of love. Shelley's mind was torn between this new and overwhelming passion and a tormenting fear of hurting Harriet, who had loved him.

Peacock's often-quoted account of Shelley's condition in this crisis leaves an ineffaceable impression: 'Nothing that I ever read in tale or history could ever present a more striking image of a sudden, violent, irresistible, uncontrollable passion than that under which I found him labouring when, at his request, I went up from the country to call on him in London. Between his old feelings towards Harriet, *from whom he was not then separated*, and his new passion for Mary, he showed in his looks, in his gestures, in his speech, the state of a mind suffering, "like a little kingdom, the nature of an insurrection." His eyes were bloodshot, his hair and dress disordered. He caught up a bottle of laudanum, and said, "I never part from this." . . . Again, he said more calmly, "Everyone who knows me must know that the partner of my life should be one who can feel poetry and understand philosophy. Harriet is a noble animal, but she can do neither." I said, "It always appeared to me that you were very fond of Harriet." Without affirming or denying this he answered, "But you did not know how I hated her sister!"'

In such a storm of the passions, little was needed to bring him to the verge of catastrophe. On July 6 he went to Godwin and asked him for his daughter. The revolutionary anti-matrimonialist was horrified, and, like the most conventional father, turned Shelley out of the house, denounced his passion as 'licentious,' and put his Mary into the custody of her disagreeable stepmother. This person relates in the sequel that 'one day when Godwin was out Shelley suddenly entered the shop and went upstairs. . . . He looked extremely wild. He pushed me aside with extreme violence, and entering, walked straight to Mary. "They wish to separate us, my beloved; but Death shall unite us," and offered her a bottle of laudanum. "By this you can escape from tyranny; and this," taking a small pistol from his pocket, "shall reunite me to you." Poor Mary turned as pale as a ghost. . . . With the tears streaming down her cheeks, she entreated him to calm himself and to go home. She told us afterwards she believed she said to him, "I won't take this laudanum; but if you will only be reasonable and calm, I will promise to be ever faithful to you." This seemed to calm him, and he left the house, leaving the phial of laudanum on the table.'

IV

Elopement or suicide: there was no other way. Yet even in the delirium of love and death Shelley's tenderness for Harriet forbade him to elope without explaining his passion to her and reassuring her of his affection. She might even prove sufficiently noble to rise to a Platonic scheme he had conceived of an ideal household — all three to live

together, Harriet as the sister of his soul, and Mary as his wife. Shelley sent for Harriet, who was now living at Bath, far from the scene of turmoil. She arrived on July 14, and he broke the news to her.

Immediately after this painful conversation he wrote the following undated letter, the first of the newly discovered correspondence.

A. Letter Number 2[1]

My dearest friend

Exhausted as I am with our interview, and secure of seeing you tomorrow at 12, I cannot yet refrain from writing to you.

I am made calmer and happier by your assurances. It is true that my confidence in the integrity and disinterestedness of your conduct has ever remained firm; but I dreaded lest the shock might inflict on you some incurable unhappiness; lest you should doubt the continuance of my affection for you, lest you should see, what I so deeply felt, nothing but misery and despair.

My spirit turned to you for consolation, and it found it; all that vulgar minds regard as so important was considered by you with consistent and becoming contempt. Feeling still persuaded that my affection for you was undim[in]ished, you offered to my view, and anticipated[2] for yourself that pure and lasting happiness which is the portion only of the great and good.

For this, dearest Harriet, from my inmost Soul, I thank you. This is perhaps the greatest among the many blessings which I have received, and still am destined to receive at your hands. I loathed the very light of day, and looked upon my own being with deep and unutterable abhorrence. I lived — Mary too consented to survive — I lived in the hope of consolation and happiness from you, and I have not been deceived.

I repeat (and believe me, for I am sincere) that my attachment to you is unimpaired. I conceive that it has acquired even a deeper and more lasting character, that it is now less exposed than ever to the fluctuations of phantasy[1] or caprice. Our connection was not one of passion and impulse. Friendship was its basis, and on this basis it has enlarged and strengthened. It is no reproach to me that you have never filled my heart with an all-sufficing passion; perhaps you are even yourself a stranger to these impulses, which one day may be awakened by some nobler and worthier than me; and may you find a lover as passionate and faithful, as I shall ever be a friend affectionate and sincere!

Shall I not be more than a friend? Oh, far more — Brother, Father of your child, so dear as it is to us both, for its own sake and because we love each other.

M[rs] Boinville deeply knows the human heart: she predicted that these struggles would one day arrive; she saw that friendship and not passion was the bond of our attachment. But I derided her short-sighted prophecies — I! who was so soon to become the object of their completion.

Can your feelings for me differ in their nature from those which I cherish towards you? Are you my lover whilst I am only your friend, the brother of your heart? If they do not, the purest and most perfect happiness is ours. I wish that you could see Mary; to the most indifferent eyes she would be interesting only from her sufferings, and the tyranny which is exercised upon her. I murmur not if you feel incapable of compassion and love for the object and the sharer of my passion.

If you want to draw on the Bankers before I see you, Hookham will give you the checks.

Adieu. Bring my sweet babe. I must ever love her for your sake.

Ever most affectionately yours

P. B. Shelley

Come at 12

Nothing could be plainer here than Shelley's urgent wish to believe that the announcement of his intended step

[1] While I have retained the numbering of these Chancery exhibits from 1 to 10, I have rearranged them according to their apparently proper order, and lettered them from A to J. In printing them, I have changed '&' to 'and.' Obvious misspellings are given in footnotes. Some punctuation has been added. — Author

[2] MS. anticapated

[1] MS. plantasy

is not a heavy blow to Harriet. Though self-absorption is annoyingly apparent in the phrase, 'It is no reproach to me that you have never filled my heart with an all-sufficing passion,' the feeling throughout is warmly and earnestly conciliatory. What is more, in face of this letter it is impossible to give a shadow of consideration to the misbegotten notion which Dowden fostered — namely, that at this time Shelley thought that Harriet had been unfaithful to him, and that he justified his leaving her on that ground. The reference to Mrs. Boinville and her somewhat officious predictions is a further testimony, if any were needed, to the obviousness of the estrangement from Harriet before Shelley found Mary.

'Feeling still persuaded that my affection for you was undiminished, you offered to my view, and anticipated for yourself that pure and lasting happiness which is the portion only of the great and good.' What Shelley imagined to be Harriet's acquiescence in his plan was certainly no more on her part than temporizing in the hope that this infatuation of his would wear off. Her 'consistent and becoming contempt' for conventionality was all in Shelley's mind, and the shock of his disclosure was a serious one to a wife who was expecting a child within five months.

In the following November, Harriet wrote her version of the affair to her friend Catherine Nugent: —

> Mary was determined to secure him. She is to blame. She heated his imagination by talking of her mother, and going to her grave with him every day, till at last she told him she was dying in love for him, accompanied with the most violent gestures and vehement expostulations. He thought of me and my sufferings, and begged her to get the better of a passion as degrading to him as to herself. She then told him she would die — he had rejected her, and what appeared to her as the sublimest virtue was to him a crime. Why could we not all live together? I as his sister, She as his wife? He had the folly to believe this possible, and sent for me, then residing at Bath. You may suppose how I felt at the disclosure. I was laid up for a fortnight after. I could do nothing for myself. He begged me to live. The doctors gave me over. They said 't was impossible. I saw his despair. The agony of my beloved sister; and owing to the great strength of my constitution I lived.[1]

According to Harriet, Mary's threat of death was a decisive move. Three years before, as a girl of sixteen, she herself had successfully used this very device to secure Shelley as a husband. She had now the bitterness of believing, however mistakenly, that another sixteen-year-old had taken him from her by the same well-tried method.

She was prostrated. In this crisis of misery, Mary called on her and told her that she would give Shelley up. The poet, in despair, took poison; but luckily the dose did not prove fatal. All three, therefore, lived. As soon as he was able to be about, and still imagining that she acquiesced in his schemes, Shelley made preliminary arrangements with Harriet and his lawyer Tahourdin for an allowance to be settled on her; and as soon as he could travel he eloped with Mary to the Continent, accompanied by Mary's stepsister, Jane Clairmont.

V

They fled on July 28. From Troyes, two weeks later, Shelley wrote the only letter to Harriet that has hitherto been published: —

> My dearest Harriet,
>
> I write to you from this detestable town; I write to show that I do not forget you;

[1] *Letters of Harriet Shelley to Catherine Nugent*, ed. Thomas J. Wise, p. 57

I write to urge you to come to Switzerland, where you will at last find one firm and constant friend, to whom your interests will be always dear — by whom your feelings will never wilfully be injured. From none can you expect this but me — all else are either unfeeling or selfish, or have beloved friends of their own, as Mrs. Boinville, to whom their attention and affection is confined. . . . [After a description of desolation in France, he continues] You shall hear our adventures more detailed if I do not hear at Neufchatel that I am soon to have the pleasure of communicating to you in person, and of welcoming you to some sweet retreat I will procure for you among the mountains. . . . I wish you to bring with you the two deeds which Tahourdin has to prepare for you, as also a copy of the settlement. Do not part with any of your money. But what shall be done about the books? You can consult on the spot. With love to my sweet little Ianthe, ever most affectionately yours,

S.[1]

A month later, instead of seeing Shelley in some sweet retreat among the mountains, Harriet saw him at her door in London. The explanation was that no sooner had the party reached Switzerland than it was discovered that funds were running short, and that Shelley could not obtain further supplies without personal application in London.

Penniless on his arrival, for immediate necessaries he was obliged to turn to Harriet for twenty pounds of the money she had drawn from his account at the bank. Mary records their return to England and this visit in the Journal:—

Tuesday, September 13. We arrive at Gravesend, and with great difficulty prevail on the captain to trust us. We go by boat to London; take a coach; call on Hookham. T. H. not at home. C. treats us very ill. Call at Voisey's. Henry goes to Harriet. Shelley calls on her, whilst poor Mary and Jane are left in the coach for two whole hours. Our debt is discharged. Shelley gets clothes for himself. Go to Strafford Hotel, dine, and go to bed.[1]

It appears that even this two-hour conference did not permit Harriet sufficiently to voice her discontent at Shelley's defection, for she followed it at once with a letter of lament.

The two were at cross-purposes. Harriet, entrenched with her sympathizers behind the wall of convention and public opinion, clung to the belief that Shelley's love for Mary was to be treated as a temporary lapse from virtue, and that consequently she might render him penitent by volleys of alternate reproach and entreaty. Shelley, unconscious of sin, and steadfastly attached to Mary, yet longed to retain Harriet as a sister of his soul. In after years Browning told W. M. Rossetti that 'Shelley, after returning from his first continental trip with Mary, consulted Basil Montagu with a view to getting back Harriet to live with them (S. and M.) and could hardly be persuaded that the thing would "never do."'[2] Shelley's notion that Harriet and Mary would get on together takes its place among the most absurd of his illusions.

Mary's next entry in the Journal is dated 'Wednesday, September 14.'

. . . Shelley calls on Harriet, who is certainly a very odd creature; he writes several letters; calls on Hookham, and brings home Wordsworth's *Excursion*, of which we read a part, much disappointed. He is a slave. Shelley engages lodgings to which we remove in the evening.

[1] *Letters of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, ed. Roger Ingpen (1914); I, 427

[1] This quotation from the Journal and those which follow are drawn from Mrs. Julian Marshall's *Life and Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*

[2] *Letters about Shelley*, ed. R. S. Garnett, p. 28

One of Shelley's 'several letters' was probably the following one to Harriet, dated September 15; for, since its contents show that he had not yet found the lodgings Mary refers to, no doubt events of the fifteenth got included in the Journal with those of the day preceding.

B. Letter Number 1

15th Sept. 1814

My dear Harriet

I have not yet obtained a lodging. I do not know that it will be possible to do so to night.

Indeed my dear friend I cannot write to you in confidence unless my letters are sacredly confined to yourself. I entrust you with circumstances and feelings which prudence and perhaps virtue forbid to be divulged: my conduct in this will be in some respects regulated by yours. A half confidence is not enough. I cannot call her a friend with whom I am to consider concerning what and concerning whom I write. I know not what is the nature and extent of the intercourse which is hereafter to take place between us. Whatever it be let it not be contaminated by the comments and interference of others. Suffice to your own self, and despise the miserable compassion of those who cannot esteem or love.

Forgive this frankness, Harriet. Let us understand each other and ourselves. I deem myself far worthier and better than any of your nominal friends. Me you may keep as a most steadfast and affectionate friend, but I have a certain price. It is confidence and truth.

You think that I have injured you. Since I first beheld you almost, my chief study has been to overwhelm you with benefits. Even now when a violent and lasting passion for another leads me to prefer her society to yours, I am perpetually employed in devising how I can be permanently and truly useful to you, in what manner my time and my fortune may be most securely expended for your real interests. In return for this it is not well that I should be wounded with reproach and blame: so unexampled and singular an attachment demands a return far different. And it would be generous, nay even just to consider with kindness that woman whom my judgment and my heart have selected as the noblest and the most excellent of human beings.

We must agree on certain points, or our intimacy will be the mere gibe and mockery of affection.

Are you above the world, and to what extent?

My attachment to Mary neither could nor ought to have been overcome. Our spirits and [blank] are united. We met with passion, she has resigned all for me.

But I shall probably see you tomorrow. I wish you to answer this letter.

Do not call what I have said cold and unfeeling. I never affected what I did not feel. Give me faith however for what I do express when I say that I am truly and affectionately your friend.

In this almost incredibly sincere and tactless note, the most striking thing is the change of tone. Harriet has carried his confidences to Eliza and her other friends for comment and advice; yet, while naturally annoyed by this, the naïve Shelley is far more disturbed at discovering the loss of his modicum of influence over her mind. Moreover he is astonished that she feels more resentment at being put away than gratitude for his past kindnesses and his plans for benefiting her in future.

On receiving this urgent communication, Harriet neglected to let him know at once whether or not she was above the world. Instead, she incautiously divulged his new address to a lawyer who had business with him. Shelley was at this time embarrassed with debts which he saw little present hope of discharging. Immediately on his return to England creditors had begun to hound him with bailiffs, and his only safety lay in concealing his whereabouts.

Uneasy at Harriet's silence, and at

the danger to which she had exposed him, Shelley promptly addressed her again.

C. Letter Number 4

16 [*recte* 56] Margaret Street
Sept.r 16, 1814

My dear Harriet

I confidently expected to have heard from you today: an answer to my letter of yesterday is indispensible to me. I am deeply solicitous to know the real state of your feelings towards myself and Mary. I will not consent that our intercourse is to be disturbed by misunderstandings so unworthy, so fatal to all peace[1] as that which dictated the last letter I received from you.

This morning Cooke's attorney called on me, and I appeared at the Insurance Office. I fear that my personal safety is endangered by your imprudence in sending him hither. It was not possible to keep the appointment in Chapel S^{t} on account of the bailiffs. My absence indeed at present from you arises from the mixed consideration of this danger and of your silence.

Where can I obtain a copy of the settlement? I am desirous that the deeds in Tahourdin's hands should be executed without delay. I owe it to myself not to continue the subject of unjust suspicion.

I have heard from Turner. M^{rs} Boinville has just received intelligence of her husband's death. She is considerably affected by this circumstance, so that probably some time will elapse before I see her.

I have reason to suppose that I am known at my present residence. I shall give you intimation of my removal, and whither, on condition of complete secrecy.

I am anxious for your answer to my letter. Collect your maturest judgment, and acquit yourself with justice towards me and Mary. United as we are we cannot be considered separately. Consider how far you would desire your future life to be placed within the influence of my superintending mind: whether you still confide sufficiently in my tried and unalterable integrity to submit to the laws which any friendship would create between us; whether we are to meet in entire and unreserved faith or allow our intimacy to subside.

On you these things depend.

Affectionately yours

P. B. Shelley

[1] MS. piece

(To be continued)

THE CONTRIBUTORS' CLUB

THE PASSING OF PIPPA

WHEN Pippa stepped out of the open door of the bookcase in my study, that evening, as she had done so many times before, I hardly knew her.

'Why, Pippa,' I exclaimed, 'you look like a wilted wild rose! What on earth is the matter with you?'

'I thought,' said she sadly, 'that perhaps you could tell me that. You know all about us, don't you? I have heard you talk by the hour to those college girls you introduced to me —'

'Oh, Pippa,' I confessed, 'we are sometimes placed by academic necessity in an entirely false position. There is much that I do not know. — Tell me, if you please, just what has happened.'

She sat down in an armchair, sighing deeply. 'There it is!' said she. 'I never used to want to sit down.'

'I know,' said I. 'You moved like a young deer.'

'For months and months,' said she, 'I have n't been like myself. — You know, of course, that the life of us characters of fiction consists of repeating, thousands, millions of times, — indefinitely, in fact, — precisely the same experiences? I have just been startled by discovering that *I can't do it any more.*

'You see, I always wake at sunrise — a beautiful, bright sunrise: —

> 'Day!
> Faster and more fast,
> O'er night's brim, day boils at last!'

'Just so,' I nodded.

'Well, this last time,' she continued despondently, 'it simply would n't boil. The weather was gray and muggy. And when I started on my walk and tried to sing, I *had* to sing off key. It was perfectly weird. But can you imagine what I felt when I found that my words either would n't come at all or came absolutely wrong?'

'That sometimes happens to a tired teacher,' said I sympathetically. 'It's very alarming at first; but it soon goes over.'

Pippa looked tragic. 'Listen to this!' said she. (Her voice was quite unrecognizable.)

> 'There's no pep in the spring,
> There's no zip in the morn;
> All's at sixes and sevens
> And deplorably soiled;
> The shrike's on the wing,
> Sticking mice on the thorn;
> There are hells, but no heavens —
> All's wrong with the world!

'It is not only the hideous ideas — but what an awful, awful rhyme!'

'Oh, don't mind that!' I soothed her. 'It might pass for local pronunciation; and anyhow, false rhyme is now the only wear. Our best critics demand it; it produces variety and flexibility. You must call it something else — I forget what. But, Pippa!' Suddenly a thought struck me. 'Dear child, I believe I've got it! The same malign influence that has forced you to rhyme *soiled* with *woild*, against your better instinct, is also responsible for the unhappy sentiments you have expressed. You are obviously a bad case of spiritual malaria.'

I continued to expound fluently, though I had not previously considered these matters. I have noticed this tendency in myself, when exhausted at

the end of a term; and have sometimes been surprised at the coherence of the product.

'You see, Pippa dear, your existence is dependent on two factors: the mind of the author and the collective mind of the readers. Reading — though it is not generally understood — is a co-operative act. Hence the general mass of readers *must* understand and sympathize with the intention of the author. When such conditions are not present, a character of fiction cannot fully come to life. Present conditions in the reading world are, it seems, unfavorable; and a poisonous atmosphere produces these unfortunate results. Have you observed it in other cases?'

'I was going to tell you,' said Pippa. 'I went on singing — if you call it singing — as I trudged up the hill, past the shrub house, in the customary way. And as I passed I heard Sebald and Ottima talking.'

'Yes,' I said expectantly, as she paused.

Pippa's forehead was knitted like that of a puzzled child. 'I could n't expect such a song as I have repeated for you,' said she, 'to produce the usual effect, could I? Still, I *was* surprised when Ottima said to Sebald, just as he was faintly beginning to show his natural reaction, "Cheer up, old thing! We have the right to be happy and live our own lives, have n't we? For pity's sake, don't be Victorian!" '

'What happened then?' I asked.

'I did n't stay to see,' answered Pippa piteously. 'I came straight to you. And now your explanation makes it clear what is affecting us all.'

I subdued my pardonable curiosity as to the symptoms of Jules and Phene, Luigi and Monsignor. 'With whom were you attempting to coöperate?' I inquired.

'It was — a *young* person,' said Pippa, pressing her eyelids with her fingertips. 'Oh, what will be the end of this?'

'Be strong, my dear,' said I. 'I will pay you the compliment of frankness. You will have to recognize that most readers of to-day consider you, in your proper state of mind, too *saccharine* — or too *roseate*. Both terms are used. Now and then you must expect these seizures, as the inevitable consequence of an altered atmosphere. But as long as there remain a few gray-haired old friends like myself, you will retain a thread of your genuine life, and can occasionally — though not with any degree of certainty — feel yourself again.'

Pippa looked at me appraisingly. She seemed to calculate my age. 'And when —?' she faltered.

'Yes, Pippa, when we pass, you will pass, too. But some of us are still robust. You may linger for years. As Herrick said to the blossoms, —

> 'Your date is not so past
> But you may stay yet here awhile
> To blush and gently smile,
> And go at last.'

I heard a little, shuddering sigh. Then I was alone. The door of the bookcase was slightly swinging. I meditated the rest of the evening on the probable future of Little Nell, Dora Copperfield, Patient Griselda, and the Lily Maid of Astolat; and projected an essay 'On the Precarious Immortality of the Characters of Fiction.'

How death may feel

She who was once my colleague, Dorothy McL——, who crossed over Lethe last year, imparted to me in the early days of our acquaintance one of those narratives in which mortal life seems to launch out on death, and then to turn its prow and come back to shore. She had all but died after a surgical operation. The watching nurses, and her

sister, had not thought she could survive the night; and she herself had been clearly conscious that she was dying.

She said that it was the most heart-satisfying experience she had ever known, and that at first she gave herself up altogether to the profound pleasure she was feeling. But gradually she began to be troubled by her sister's grief. For her sister's sake she made a monstrous effort at recovery; it succeeded, and she reëntered mortal life. 'But I was convinced,' said she, 'that I was making an enormous sacrifice; I thought so at the time, and now, when years have gone by, I think so still.'

Her account is quite in keeping with many others we receive from persons who have approached death after an anæsthetic and either a severe illness or an operation. They usually report death as an indescribably agreeable experience. 'A floating out,' they sometimes call it, thus bearing witness to the verisimilitude in the imagery of the boat in 'Morte d'Arthur,' and that in Arnold's poem, 'The Life of Man.'

There is nothing in these reports about that swift rush of memory through the whole previous life which is generally believed to take place when drowning. Yet such rushes of memory are common in dreams, which so often seem to be constructed without a proper recognition of time; so much so that an English engineer maintained, in an odd book a year or two ago, that in sleep we move with perfect ease both forward and backward on the time-tape, and visit the future as readily as we do the past.

Doctors tell us that death is calm and painless in ninety-five out of a hundred cases. Maeterlinck argues against the association with death of sickness and pain. These, he maintains, belong to life's debit; death emancipates us from them. Keats, the fiery, pugnacious youth, the ardent and accepted lover, found it in his heart to say, —

> Now more than ever seems it rich to die.

Any association of love with death seems to brush aside all childish notions of dreadfulness. The survivor of lovers whom death has parted looks forward to death as a reunion. 'Is there ony room at your head, Saunders? Is there ony room at your feet?' Romeo, with confident brevity, says,—

> 'Well, Juliet, I will lie with thee to-night.'

The lovers in Heine's song are so well pleased with the privacy of the grave that they disdain to join in the noisy and crowded resurrection.

> The dead stand up, the judgment calls,
> They rise in airy swarms;
> We two stay still where the grave shade falls,
> And I lie on in thine arms.

Sometimes, lying on the ground at the foot of a tree in summer, and having strayed far enough away from the teasing vibrations of self-consciousness to feel a gliding in of cosmic relaxation, one can imagine an almost imperceptible death; a final drowsing-off of some outdoors-living old age like Walt Whitman's into so complete a sleep, lying thus, that such a sleep, by hushed and lulling degrees, would blend unnoticed into death; and the body, never discovered by bustling coroner or officious passers-by, subjected to no funeral, would nestle back into earth with æolian sighs of comfort and security.

I entertain the notion that death, in unwinding the tapes and unsealing the legal wafers of personality, may very likely impart an intoxicating sense of expansion, such as Browning describes in another regard: —

> . . . a long-cramped scroll
> Freshening and fluttering in the wind.

Certainly a sensation of newness and freshness, a sort of divine gloss all over the vegetation of earth and over those experiences of daily life that formerly seemed humdrum, is peculiar to those who have been mistakenly convinced that they were ill with a fatal malady. It is very like the penetrating refreshment of the senses which mystics find after their spiritual excursion. Apparently the loosening of the body's hold upon us, even when it is due only to a mistaken belief, has some vitalizing power over life, enriching the capacity of the body itself for wonder and for joy.

Pointing the view

'Into our modern age there's a point of view creeping,' writes an earnest young person who never studied mathematics long enough to reach geometry. If a point has no dimensions, what arrangements has it for creeping? A university dean recently had a more subtle idea, suggesting a beneficent dumdum bullet. 'There is a kind of momentum about a point of view once mastered,' he wrote, 'which makes it go on developing in the mind.' 'A fuller and more balanced point of view' is advocated by the *New York Times;* and dozens of well-meaning people tell us to broaden our point of view. Points of view have so magnified their office that no one nowadays attempts to adopt views, or express views; we merely take a point of view, or a 'concrete standpoint,' as one journalist advises, and we rest satisfied.

Trying to find out more about these necessities of life, we learn from a freshman discussing college traditions that 'there are viewpoints which grow up in a place,' whereat a literal-minded listener feels himself to be surveying the campus from something very like a toadstool. *Plato's American Republic* has already informed us that 'there are many points upon which it is excellent to camp, and chief among them the nature of the good.' So we get back to the broad point of view so frequently mentioned. It may even be broad enough, if it is the nature of the good, to serve as 'the home stretch toward the unattained' of which a preacher recently told us.

During the early days of the war a woman mentioned to me that she was assembling her point of view. Many others were presumably busy at the same task, and when they finished the assembling they sat down in a way calculated to hold the mosaic together and to weld its various elements beyond breaking. The other day someone told me of buttressing his point of view by careful investigation. Not yet have I heard of an upholstered point of view, but I am only waiting; already we are treating the spot like a divan. The United States, according to the Foreign Policy Association, 'bolstered the French viewpoint' on disarmament in May 1929, and in doing so 'paved the way for agreement.' Would n't 'carpeted' be a better term than 'paved,' especially as the whole thing was 'on the carpet'? National points of view have often 'clashed,' in these international parleys, and there has often developed, between two opposing points of view, 'a great deal of friction.'

The moving points of view beloved by writers of descriptive literature do not always creep; they are so likely to run away that their owners positively need to tether them. I have read of a person who 'pursues his point of view with no thought of others' welfare.' The book reviewers have a special gift of noting the strange habits of points of view. One of them says of a certain author, 'He brings to his present undertaking a rich and racy point of view.' And Struthers Burt tells us that 'to

write truthfully of pots, pans, rape, and gunmen in their relationship to universal sorrow requires the objectivity of a released viewpoint.' A shifting point of view, even with its halter dangling, is, however, an easier conception to form than that suggested in the following passage from a recent magazine article: 'It's all right for every man to have his own viewpoint, but the danger lies in adopting a viewpoint the way a house adopts paint — by having someone lay it on.'

Perhaps these spacious and agile points of view, defying mathematical orthodoxy in their versatile performances, harmonize after all with the newer laws of physics and mathematics. After reading a few expositions of relativity, of the latest quantum theory, and of space-time, one no longer demurs when a radio fan remarks, 'I got a new point of view this morning, listening in. Just *look* at the education we get through our ears!' Thinking of the first time I heard Big Ben telling the London hour to American listeners-in, I am ready to say that one does hear a new point of view every once in a while. This is a favorable moment for physics to tell us that our everyday world is as truly four-dimensional as any Utopian playground of H. G. Wells.

But still I feel a little uneasy about these points of view on which we perch so airily. From their vantage we look at something and everything in a way that commits us to nothing. Some such notion as this must lie behind the increasing vogue of the phrase. Naturally the phrase begins to seem weak, and one advertiser has already felt moved to proclaim that he is offering 'values powerfully interesting from any standpoint of view.' We are tempted to reflect that, with the multiplying of points of view, less and less is seen from them.

Self-sufficiency

Before the sharks and flounders swam
I was the clam, the only clam.
I have been always what I am,
Autonomous life, the only clam.

I feel the pressure of the tides
Change against my pearly sides.
Soulless pebbles rattle by
Never guessing I am I.
It enchants me they don't know
How near to royalty they go.

Occasionally, for my sake,
The waves go farther out to break,
The sun beats down upon my sand,
I majestically expand,
I move my unique diaphragm;
Noblesse oblige. I am THE CLAM.

THE CONTRIBUTORS' COLUMN

Gamaliel Bradford, during a dozen years the most frequent of all *Atlantic* contributors, — witness forty-four papers of his which we have published to our satisfaction, — has never, we think, drawn a portrait more interesting than this for the American public to gaze upon. ΔResponsibility for the education of some thousands of young women renders this judgment which **President Neilson** passes upon the value and danger of censorship of exceptional importance. **Edward Weeks** is a member of the *Atlantic* staff who has made a close study of the machinery of censorship.

For years **Jay Zarado** swung in jubilant safety from the top of the Big Tent. She did somersaults and flip-flops at any height. But a motor on the highroad unhappily cut short her career of thrills and applause. **Merle Colby** is a Boston bookman. **Dr. Irvine** is in a London hospital recovering, we are happy to say, from a dangerous illness. **William A. Croffut** was, during the generation of the Civil War, an all-knowing correspondent at the Capital. **Rosalie Hickler** is the author of a number of lyric verses which have appeared in the *Atlantic*. **Mrs. Risley** lives in the heart of Arkansas — if Arkansas has a heart. **H. D. Hill** has been studying government in a number of European capitals. **Ralph Adams Cram** is the famous architect of many Gothic churches. **Owen Lattimore,** author of *The Desert Road to Turkestan,* is now on his way to new explorations in China. **André Siegfried,** student of peoples and governments, is at present on a new American tour. **William L. Sullivan** is a minister of the Gospel, living in Pennsylvania. **Bradford K. Daniels,** known to us by a remarkable autobiographical paper entitled 'Pagan,' which we shall shortly publish, sends his 'Götterdämmerung' from the State of Washington. **Edgar Lawrence Smith** published in 1924 a volume on *Common Stocks as Long Term Investments* which had a widespread influence. Unfortunately, many who followed his judicious theories to injudicious extremes neglected his chapter entitled 'The Time Hazard in the Purchase of Common Stocks,' in which stress is laid upon maintaining a 'liquid position' in times of high prices. Mr. Smith is at present President of the Irving Investors Management Company, the successor to Investment Managers Company, which he was instrumental in organizing in 1924. ΔCaptain Owen Tweedy's paper announced for this issue is postponed to make room for the Shelley letters. **Arnold J. Toynbee,** long a professor at London University and an acknowledged expert on Eastern affairs, is now attending the Pacific Relations Conference.

The recent contributor to the Club who suggested collections for the indigent hardly knew what he was in for. More collectors than ever robbed a bird's nest have sprung into the predatory ranks. But collecting is n't the only fun. You must prove the items in your rival's collection spurious. Among the curios offered by our contributor is this explanation of 'the bitter end.' In describing a terrific storm at Yarmouth Roads, Robinson Crusoe wrote: 'We rode with two anchors ahead, and the cables veered out to the better end.' 'Better,' the writer holds, was corrupted to 'bitter.' But Mr. Henry C. Lahee, who was once a sailor and still knows a bitt when he sees one, remarks that in the days of Crusoe there were no chain cables and the anchor was 'bent' to a hawser which was veered out over the bitts and made fast to them when a sufficient number of fathoms had been paid out. Defoe probably wrote — or meant — the 'bitted' end.

Our collector makes a graceful attri-

bution of his 'P's and Q's' to the ancient injunction of the dancing school, 'Gardez vos pieds et queues.' Other collectors pounce on this exhibit, and label it (we ourselves should have done so) as derived from the landlord's score board where the pints and quarts of our granddaddies were chalked up fatefully against them. A more erudite explanation is sent us from Paris by Mr. George Ladd Munn, who states that in the manuscripts of the mediæval period the letter P with one or more dots or other marks indicated the particular Latin preposition beginning with the letter P which was to be supplied (*per*, *pro*, etc.), while the letter Q in similar fashion was made to represent the desired form of the pronoun (*quis*, *quid*, etc.).

The tavern, it seems, has left its mark on our language as well as on our predilections. Professor Gaehr, of Wells College, sends this entertaining specimen for our collection — 'I took him down a peg,' so current in familiar speech. 'In England it was a custom, in the alehouses, to serve the drink in large wooden tankards, which were passed round the table. Each man would drink as much as he could without stopping for breath. Now down the tankard, probably on the inside, there was a series of holes into which a peg could be inserted. It was therefore possible to gauge a man's ability at a long draught. If you could drink three pegs and I four, then I took you down a peg.'

Then, of course, there is Dick's hatband. As letters all the way from Yorkshire to Honan assure us, 'It went round seven times, and would not turn in at the end.' This seems queer enough, but it is queerer when one remembers that Dick was Richard Cromwell, and his hat the sorry substitute for a crown.

An amusing item in our contributor's collection disclosed how the weak went to the wall. On this Mr. S. V. M. Ray, a lawyer at Miami, contributes an equally entertaining gloss. It was the custom, he tells us, of the Lombard merchants, or rather of their indignant creditors, to break the benches or counters of those who failed to pay their debts. (Italian *banca rotta:* Latin *rupta*.) The bankrupt, with counter smashed, certainly went to the wall.

Doubtless, as many readers remind us, 'to a T' comes from the accuracy of a T-square, but whether 'coming down to brass tacks' alludes to the yard marks tacked to the counters in the 'general stores' of our youth, or is borrowed from the vocabulary of the sailor, who scoured his ship down to the last brass tack, is apparently for every man to decide for himself.

'Calling a spade a spade' presents some difficulties. *Spada* was the sword which served as the precursor of the spade on early decks of cards, but a sword is rather a rough and ready weapon to be spoken of so gingerly. An ingenious correspondent, the Reverend Daniel McGurk, opines that the overnice were reluctant to refer to a *spayed* bitch. However this may be, the delicacy enveloping a spade was of ancient origin. Erasmus, as Udall renders him, was aware of it: 'Philippus aunswered, that the Macedonians wer feloes of no fyne witte in their termes, but altogether grosse, clubbyshe, and rusticall, as they whiche had not the witte to calle a spade by any other name then a spade.'

This seems, does it not, to put the boot on the other foot, where we will leave it. But, before turning to pastures new, may we ask someone to inform us why the etymologists are so fond of picking on the dog? With them it is 'a dirty dog' and 'a dog's life.' They 'dog-ear' our pages, and tell us we 'blush like a dog' when we have n't the grace to blush at all. It is natural enough to 'let sleeping dogs lie,' but why 'try it on the dog' or 'lead a dog's life'?

Have n't any of you a word to throw at a dog?

How different and how appealing is this understanding tribute from a lover of dogs.

TO TOTO

Little toy dog, curl and lie —
Apple of milady's eye —
Curl and cuddle in her lap
For a quiet canine nap.

Einstein will not worry you
With his lambda and his mu:
Silly philosophic schemes
Cannot curdle in your dreams.

God is someone you can see,
Silken femininity,
Exquisite in flesh and bone,
Warmer than a god of stone.

You have no unholy yen
For the pallid sins of men:
All the old Mosaic laws
Cannot manacle your paws.

Sex is neither wrong nor right,
Just a simple appetite,
Never troubled you a bit.
Men have complicated it.

Run or bark or make a fuss,
That is not enough for us,
We need radios to live,
And the talkies, God forgive!

We, the silly jackanapes,
Bending over ticker tapes,
Following a put and call,
Watching Anaconda fall:

Sweating in our petty shops,
Figuring the curve of crops,
Aching over overhead,
Marking losses in the red:

Guessing what the end will be
Out beyond eternity:
Sipping on our anodyne,
Immortality or wine.

You are wiser as you are
Following a canine star:
Dream your dainty little dream
Of a saucer and some cream.

WILFRED J. FUNK

The Editor would gladly fill this Column with the delightful correspondence of his friend, Mr. Charles D. Stewart, but must content himself with a single example. An *Atlantic* reader, Mr. Charles W. Collins of Pittsburgh, inquired why Mr. Stewart had planned war upon sparrows while he contented himself with merely treading the dandelion underfoot. Mr. Stewart replies:

DEAR MR. COLLINS: —

I might have known that, while I was preoccupied with sparrows, others would be equally interested in dandelions. I never did get rid of them, either by single combat or chemical warfare. I found it easier to change my attitude toward dandelions, and to ask myself what my real objections are against them, anyway.

As for sparrows, they would not let me sleep to a reasonable hour in the morning. A sparrow always 'takes off' with a chattering, scolding noise; his leap into space is accompanied with a noise like a small airplane and an impudent whirr of his electric horn. Consequently their habit of using the bedroom window sill as a perching place every morning interfered with my own rights in what I had supposed was my own house. I kept on till I fixed them permanently. And then when I turned my attention to the dandelions again it occurred to me that they had not really 'done me anything.' In Peter Henderson's catalogue, too, I noted that they had nice dandelion seed for sale — that some people cultivate them carefully in their gardens; a fact that made them look a little different to me. As I could not kill them even by cutting them off below the crowns, I decided to change my mind about them; and that was the end of the whole trouble between me and them!

It is the same with snakes. My house is built of glacial granite bowlders of such size that the walls are two feet thick. Above ground the crevices between these undressed stones are well filled with mortar; but just at the ground line, where the soil has sunk a little, there are cracks and openings leading deep into the thick wall; and this state of affairs exactly suits the purposes of a snake. It is an avenue of escape; it holds the heat and keeps him warm on chilly nights; and in winter it offers the poor snake a place in which he may go to sleep and not freeze to death. It seemed that whenever I went to water the vines or trim the grass by the wall I was always meeting a snake who was in a great hurry. I would act more rapidly and often kill one. But as years went on there was no change in the snake situation; and in the meantime I had had a snake's problems, and his way of locomotion, repeatedly brought to my attention. I saw more and more that a snake is mysterious and beautiful; and I began to think them out. On my study window sill (two feet wide, as I have explained) are two deep cages of fine wire netting containing snakes, Jimmy and Pete. They eat angleworms at mealtimes, and are always doing things that are interesting. My wife has become interested in them and their ways and refers to them by name. I would love to write about snakes; but, unlike trees and evolution, snakes have not had a good press. You know that Ellery Sedgwick, some while back, alluded to the fact that evolution had had a good press.

I have mentioned Jimmy and Pete by way of illustrating what may be done by the simple

process of changing one's mind. It is the only way I can think of to get the best of a dandelion. Yellow is really a beautiful color.

CHARLES D. STEWART

A correspondent of this Column announced the other day that the casual adventurer is grown as rare as the stowaway on a Zeppelin. To which a present-day adventurer takes exception. The tribe, he says, is not extinct, but merely inarticulate, and goes on to tell of his own wanderings in 'antres vast and deserts idle.'

NEW YORK CITY

DEAR ATLANTIC, —

I have just returned from a five months' trip through the wilds of Southern Rhodesia and Portuguese East Africa. I carried a pack, had no money, shot meat for food, and lived like a native, on the country. I was attacked by one crocodile, four baboons, and a herd of buffalo. The trip commenced when, as a sailor, my ship, the *Western Knight*, was wrecked on April 8, 1929, at Port Elizabeth, South Africa. On August 21, I was arrested in Umtali, Southern Rhodesia, and deported to Cape Town. On September 24, I was signed on as mess boy on the *S.S. Eastern Glen* and made to work my way to New York, landing on November 2, 1929. The total cost of my trip, including rifle and equipment, was $130 — and I still owe $60 for the rifle.

With pack and rifle, often penniless, I have made my way from Canada through every country on the way to Venezuela. I have joined three revolutions in Mexico and was with Sacasa in Nicaragua in 1926. I have known illness, fever, cold, hunger, heat; floundered through swamps; crossed deserts. I've been outlawed and had a price on my head, dead or alive. I've chased men; been chased by men, and have bullet scars. I've never had, in my life, a job at more than $4.50 per day, except as a revolutionist. I've hoboed my way over the United States and sailed on many ships. In the last five years I have never had as much as $150 at a time. In Philadelphia, in October 1927, I was penniless and had nothing to eat for six days. And in my wanderings I have met many, many more of my own kind.

It is a hard life the wanderer leads. Yet the fascination of the unknown lying over the horizon's edge draws him on. For, as I look back, there comes to me the Grand Canyon of the Colorado in the moonlight; the Owens Lake vista; the savannas of Honduras; the rearing peaks of the Andes in the morning sun as I saw them from where I crouched in the lee of a stone for shelter, at 17,000 feet altitude; the rush of great beasts through the bush, and their hair-raising appearance in charge when, on the Lundi River of Southern Rhodesia, I tackled a herd of buffalo; the Waianae Mountains of Oahu in a mist veil; the surge and shiver and upheaval of a ship in a storm, while the waves crash over the bulwark and roar over the deck; the fierce, unconquerable excitement as the blood lust rises when the shrilling machete men leap to the assault.

Yes, the out trails still know them, these men who

> See afar a light that is past eye seeing,
> Hear the far-off murmur of magic seas,
> Reach for a star and follow a phantom fleeing,
> Drawn by the beauty of unknown leas.

LEWIS V. CUMMINGS

'Are ordinary people interesting?' queries a friend, and answers his own question.

Eleanor Risley's people are. Anybody she might write about would be, for she writes that way. Grandmother Brown is, too. Her daughter-in-law has preserved intact the pioneer atmosphere, no slight accomplishment. The mountain folk are, for they are the last bulwark between Elizabethan English and seeming destruction. 'Stump farm' people are so naturally.

I sometimes wonder whether I myself might not have been interesting twenty-five years ago.

One rainy Saturday during Christmas week in 1901, my father and I drove all day long over country mud roads in a no-top spring wagon — what the New Englanders call a democrat wagon — to one of the best-known preparatory schools in the South. In the rear of the wagon was my small zinc-covered trunk filled with bedding and books. My wardrobe, practically all on my back, consisted of one black coat and vest, mostly wool; one pair of striped pants, mostly cotton; one pair of brogan shoes, mostly squeak; two shirts, a few collars, and money to match. I deposited the only fifty dollars I had ever had in the local bank and began to check it out twenty-five cents at a time as needed to meet the cash requirements of my first educational venture.

According to the standards I was already educated, particularly in respect to my mother tongue. I spoke Elizabethan American. I had never seen a mountain, though I grew up within fifty miles of the foothills of that enchanted land, 'clum' trees, 'wropped up' my toes when I 'stumped' them, and 'holp' raise the bread and meat on the farm. In ordinary speech I used many of the old forms enumerated by

Charles Morrow Wilson in the August *Atlantic*. I reckon I would be using them yet but for the sharp barbs of my more sophisticated schoolmates. Their ridicule, plus some years in the classics later, a little French, some self-acquired German, and the corrupting influences of the barbarians have spread an imperfect veneer over what might otherwise have remained a picturesque style.

Yet in spite of it all I sometimes even now cause an occasional slight arching of the eyebrows when unawares I "low that sich and sich' is the case. But my would-be critics are charitable. Those who happen to know that I went to Yale, have a doctor's degree, and sometimes write for the *Atlantic* are sure that the slip is nothing but a prostrate pass at wit.

Though in the forties, my early experiences parallel much more nearly those of Grandmother Brown than they do those of my Phi Beta Kappa New England wife who graduated at Smith, third in a class of three hundred and sixty-five.

And so it goes. We Elizabethans break out to study the world; and the world breaks in to study us.

The pleasantest thing about travel is the traveler's capacity to find unfamiliar interest in a familiar scene. Such a gift is Edward Newton's. To us fireside travelers he brings the kind of refreshment described in the couplet of 'a once famous American, now rapidly being forgotten,' sent us by Mr. W. C. Hawthorne of Chicago: —

If with vision unfurled you leave your abode
You may go 'round the world by old Marlboro' road.

Have you an iconoclast in your family? And if you have, what do you do with him? We have, and our philosophy runs, If you can't keep him silent let him have his say, asking our friends with quiet earnestness not to hold us responsible.

THE SALLYPORT

Is Mr. Bradford's Coolidge the 'real' Coolidge? Alas, it is no easy matter to put a 'real' man into a book. It would be a more pertinent question to ask whether there has ever been a 'real' Coolidge. Is there a conscientious medical man alive who can gravely certify to his entrance into the world? Is there any adequate evidence that he has ever truly existed? How many of us could ourselves offer such evidence? We have heard a voice over the radio, cracking with a sudden twang that strained and portentous silence that follows the announcer's balmy intonations. We have accepted the assurance, from persons totally unseen and unknown, that the voice belonged to a 'real' Coolidge. We have read speeches in the newspapers, and seen a figure in the moving-picture news reels. But these evidences, looked at with an unprejudiced eye, are singularly inadequate. Even the physical presence which some of us may have observed, while certainly tending toward verisimilitude, is not altogether competent to establish the case. Who knows what could not be done by a little group of bankers or a small board of politicians who understand that the country is not ruled by its laws, but by its fictions?

And why should we not be ruled by a fiction? A fiction, that is, without the bother of a man behind it, for we shall be ruled by fictions in any case. The Cheshire cat, as a cat, was far less effective than its mere floating grin. And so with the President. No 'real' Coolidge could have had half the success which the fictitious Coolidge enjoyed. If there was a 'real' Coolidge, — and the more we think of this hypothesis, the more we are inclined to doubt it, — then it was not he, but the fictitious Coolidge, who ruled the country so greatly to its satisfaction. It was just the virtue of Coolidge to be admirably unreal. A 'real' President — we mean one who makes his personal force as an individual existing man unquestionably felt — arouses the enmity and jealousy of the people. Witness the eclipsed Wilson, whose name is never mentioned when statesmen meet to discuss disarmament and peace. It could not be plausibly maintained that Wilson never existed.

But Coolidge was essentially a fiat of the country's imagination. Endowed with the typical virtues, stamped with every traditional characteristic, his career answers perfectly to the necessities of fiction, from his rustic origin to his retirement, which suggests a delicate classical allusion. Like Cincinnatus, he has come home after the splendors and powers of office to his little country

villa. The popular imagination has rounded out the figure of Coolidge, and completed its work with him. Now, like an author who has tired of his early writings, or has outgrown them, it is looking about for a new theme. Hoover offers many possibilities, but there are discouraging signs of reality about him, as there were about Lindbergh, who resisted every attempt to turn him into the national milksop.

It grieves us to utter anything even faintly disparaging to Mr. Bradford, but we cannot help thinking that the best discussion of the 'real' Coolidge which we have seen appeared some time ago in the columns of a contemporary. It was a brief notice, reviewing, in the best tone of dramatic criticism, all his appearances on the screen, in the news reels, taking them up as though they were the work of a comedian of exquisite talents, a comedian who preserved an admirable gravity, an air of innocent if somewhat pessimistic wonder, amid all surroundings, whether he were arrayed in the sleekly tailored costume of the official reception or the less formal chaps and sombrero of the Southwest. This notice discussed Coolidge as, essentially, he was: it looked on him as a figure created by the national imagination. And the most eminent example of the country's creative capacity certainly deserved serious æsthetic consideration.

We approve of Dr. Sullivan's vigorous application of a logic-poultice to some of the inflammations which the critics of religion have offered as healthy and sincere arguments. Dr. Sullivan makes good sport of the 'Copernican argument,' the conclusion that man is debased as the size of the known universe expands. Yet, while Dr. Sullivan goes far toward destroying the logic of the Copernican argument, it was not logic that gave it birth. It sprang from an all but inescapable feeling. Men have been known to fly, sickened, after their first look through a telescope. That is the Copernican argument. Mere size has, no doubt, nothing logically to do with a spiritual judgment; but the knowledge that the earth is not the centre of the celestial system, and that its dimensions are infinitesimal in comparison with innumerable members of the whole, leaves many with little active disposition to believe that man is important to any intelligence but his own. But cosmic humility will not hurt us. It has been said that the meek shall inherit the earth. Perhaps they will also inherit the universe.

That literary censorship should have to be seriously and painstakingly discussed by two busy men as an effort toward relieving the public of a moral oppression shows the dreadful perversion in our notion of what is important and what is n't. Nero fiddled while Rome burned, and has consequently been held up as an example of inattention to the main business in hand. But he could not put the fire out, and something is to be said for the cultivation of a musical ear at any time. Our custodians of the public morals probably cannot be expected to do much, actually, toward mitigating real social evils. Very well then, if they cannot put the fire out, let them fiddle. They will be far better so employed than interfering with numerous custodians of their own morals who wish to read books, even if the books are naughty and reprehensible.

Many things lead to the conviction that Americans are terribly afraid of words and ideas and remarkably callous toward facts. We all know that vices and moral horrors worse than any hitherto described in books exist in every quarter of the land. Knowledge of this fact inspires little action; but expressions of it in books — records of the significant experience of people in their journey through the world — move an influential section of the community to self-righteous indignation that too often finds a legislative outlet. The methods of our police in applying to arrested men the third degree result in horrors that can only be thought of with a shudder. Yet a fact of this kind seems less important to our moral guardians than the danger that a book may advocate a new social theory, or a novel may contain a scene of seduction. Perhaps it is too much to expect those interested in moral causes to deal with real evils; but if this must be so, it seems a pity that there should be so little demand for fiddles.